11-13-2019

Chinese International Graduate Students' Perspectives of Individual Writing Consultations

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By

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A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies

through the Faculty of Education

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of Master of Education

at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

2019

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ABSTRACT

When entering graduate school, many Chinese international graduate students, particularly

those in education programs, struggle to meet the new academic expectations they encounter

(Huang & Klinger, 2006), particularly with respect to writing assignments as they are

writing in an additional language at an academic level for the first time. To support these

students, many universities offer writing support in the form of writing centres that offer

one-on-one consultations. These programs are critical to give students the support they need

to improve their academic outcomes and achieve their potential. However, these services

face a number of issues, ranging from a lack of funding and training, to the establishment of

clear pedagogical guidelines, and there is limited research on the strategies these writing

centres employ and how they can be improved. In addition, there is a gap in the literature on

individual writing consultations (IWCs) with respect to students' perspective as most

research focuses on the perspectives of those operating writing support services. This

exploratory study's objective is to investigate what a small group of Chinese international

graduate students enrolled in education programs think of IWCs at a Canadian university.

This study is unique because it focuses on students' experiences and perceptions of IWCs.

By exploring these perspectives, the current study seeks to examine what these services need

to effectively support this population, what they lack, and how they can be improved.

Keywords: Individual Writing Consultations, Chinese International Graduate Students,

Challenges, Academic Writing, Academic Writing Development

DEDICATION

To myself

To my mother

To my grandparents

To all the participants in this study

To all the people who have helped me

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

each interview question. They provided a variety of wonderful perspectives and suggestions

regarding IWCs, which made significant contributions to my knowledge body of IWCs.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL – English as a Foreign Language

ESL – English as Second Language

IWC – Individual Writing Consultation

UWindsor – University of Windsor

WSD – Writing Support Desk

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION
Background

As a growing number of international students who are non-native English-speakers are pursuing degrees in Canadian and American tertiary institutions, an increasing number of support programs, particularly writing support programs/centres, have been developed to help these students achieve the same writing level as native speakers (Moussu, 2013). A key component of these programs is IWCs that promote the enhancement of writing skills through one-on-one appointments. Though these consultations provide English as a second language (ESL) students multiple benefits, they also entail a quantity of challenges for these ESL students (Moussu, 2013). It is therefore important to determine how effective such consultations are when supporting this population and ascertain any limitations or challenges associated with the delivery of their services. This requires research that considers both the perspectives of those who offer the service and its recipients. However, the literature on the subject has generally overlooked the perspectives of those who receive the service, which is critical to identify ways to improve such services. Thus, to address this gap, the current study focuses on the students' perspectives of IWCs at the UWindsor. The researcher collected feedback and observations from Chinese international graduate students from the Faculty of Education. This study explores and evaluates their attitudes towards experiences with their university's IWCs and examine merits and demerits of these consultations. Qualitative data was collected from nine participants to investigate how effectively IWCs developed their writing competence and determine what approaches have proven effective and what challenges have inhibited the service. The findings of the current study aim to provide some constructive suggestions for IWCs at post-secondary institutions to ensure that such

consultations can improve the support that writing support programs/centres offer international students studying at the graduate level.

There has been a steep rise in the number of international graduate students and multilingual writers in American and Canadian universities, and their needs warrant thorough research (Nakamaru, 2010). The largest proportion of Canadian international students are from China, and the growth rate of this population between the years 2005 and 2015 was 200%, increasing from 39,850 to 119,335 (Canada's Immigration and Employment, 2016). Moreover, Chinese students constitute about 34% of Canadian international students, 58% of whom are graduate students (Canadian Bureau for International Education [CBIE], 2016). Given that this is a large non-domestic academic population, it is critical to understand and support their unique needs. Based on data provided by a staff member at IWCs being examined, graduate students from the Faculty of Education account for between 16-20% of the service's users in a given term, in part due to their writing intensive courses. Therefore, this paper focuses on Chinese master's-level students from the Faculty of Education at UWindsor.

IWCs in Higher Education

According to Simpson (2012), IWCs in American universities are grounded on mentorship or advising relationships and vary based on department and/or advisor. Ma (2017) notes that in Australia, IWCs are a language support service that takes the form of one-on-one advice between learning advisors with proficient writing skills and attendees who seek help. The similar writing support programs/centres have also occurred in Canadian universities (Corcoran, Gagne, & Mclntosh, 2018; Okuda & Anderson, 2017). Previous studies document several patterns of IWCs in post-secondary organizations:

writing laboratories where students get in-person individual support, which is the most common approach; remote copy editing that focuses on language and not content, which is offered by retired lectures from participating departments; and writing consultants who are privately hired to provide writing support in accordance with students' schedules (Ma, 2007).

IWCs at University of Windsor

The WSD is located on the ground floor of the university's library. It is in a large cubicle that is appximately 16 by 16 feet and has four desks as work stations: one in each corner. Each desk is about five feet long and can comfortably sit two or three people. Each work station has a computer with a 24-inch monitor. The service is open Monday to Friday from 10.00 am until 7.00 pm, and Saturday from 10.00 am to 5.00 pm. Each appointment is 30 minutes long which can be booked online or by phone. Sometimes walk-in is possible as well.Students can email the files they wish to work on prior to their arrival. Some of the writing advisors are regular staff while the others are volunteers. They have between one and six years of experience.

Faculty Views of IWCs

Woodward-Kron (2007) states that "individual writing consultations are sometimes conceptuali[z]ed one-dimensionally by faculty as a form of editing" (p. 253). Because faculty members do not believe that editing students' papers is their responsibility (Huijser, Kimmins, & Galligan, 2008), they encourage students, especially non-English speaking students, to seek a mentor to edit or proofread their paper (Huijser et al., 2008; Ma, 2007). Thus, they send students to IWCs to acquire writing skills to fill the gap between them and native students (Moussu, 2013; Moussu & David, 2015;

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Okuda & Anderson, 2017). University professors and ESL students see these consultations as "grammar repair shops" that help ESL by focusing more on feedback and grammar issues (Moussu, 2013, p. 56).

The term 'writing support program' refers to the academic initiative put forward by a university. Writing support programs in American universities have different titles, such as writing centres, writing labs, writing clinics, and writing desks (Boquet, 1999), and a similar phenomenon has occurred in Canadian universities (Corcoran, Gagne, & Mclntosh, 2018), which use terms such as "center for writers" in University of Alberta (J. Y. Shen, personal communication, July 25, 2018) and "Writing support desk" in UWindsor (J. Horn, personal communication, July 19, 2018). For the purposes of the current study, the term 'writing support centres' will be used to refer to writing support programs in general.

The potential audiences of this study include researchers, writing instructors, administrators, and students. This study can provide a basis for researchers with an interest in second language education, particularly with regard to writing to establish the theory that has suitability for their purposes and they would be very interested in the current study. To be more specific, writing centres will develop into the similar forms, underpinned by a completely explicit theory in the near future, though writing centres "have always been diverse in their pedagogies, philosophies, and physical make-ups" (Olson, as cited in Ede, 1989, p. 5). In addition, this study foregrounds students' views with respect to strengths and weaknesses of IWCs, which has the potential to offer an engaging overview of IWCs for educators in post-secondary institutions. Based on this study, writing instructors can decide if they should recommend this service to their

students. Administrators who administer the writing centres in post-secondary institutions might optimize advantageous resources available for students through IWCs to guarantee students to gain effective language support. Furthermore, these administrators can enact agency to recruit more writing advisors to satisfy students' demands for editing professional writing in different genres and disciplines. Some Chinese international students who are studying in Canadian post-secondary institutions and other Chinese students who plan to go to Canadian universities to pursue degrees may be interested in this study as they can draw on information provided by alumni to identify some noteworthy areas in IWCs. To share findings with the target audiences, the researcher will summarize the information and send it back to the writing centre administrators and participants. A poster will be also created that the researcher can share at the Faculty of Education Research Day to reach the present and future educators of Chinese international students and Chinese international students.

Situating the Researcher

As a graduate student from the Faculty of Education, I often have writing-intensive coursework. As Ondrusek (2012) notes, graduate programs require students to complete written assignments in order to determine whether students understand and can critically apply course content to generate new knowledge. Thus, effective writing is critical to a graduate student's education (Ondrusek, 2012). Because English is my second language, I often seek assistance from IWCs. Therefore, I am familiar with the merits and demerits of IWCs. With respect to the value of the support, there are a number of issues that the writing advisors help me with. For example, they help to identify whether I am conforming to the assignment guidelines and the expectations of Western

academic standards. This includes content, quality of sources, and citing and referencing protocol. They not only help with thesis construction and organization, but also help to identify assignment criteria by providing instruction on how to interpret assignment instructions. They also provide insights into supervisors' suggestions and writing expectations. Many studies indicate that writing consultants play a critical role as translators between thesis-track students and their supervisors and can explain supervisors' writing requirements depending on individual students' comprehension (Vygotsky, 1978; Woodward-Kron, 2007). With respect to enhancing the language of my work, there are multiple benefits they offer. For instance, as an adult language learner, I struggle with language fossilization, which means my understanding of English has plateaued and my negative mother-tongue transfer often inhibits my English language proficiency (Selinker, 1972). For example, I often construct a sentence in Chinese using Chinese grammar rules and then translate each word into English while maintaining the Chinese grammatical structure. This invariably creates Chinglish expressions where Chinese and English grammar are different. Though it is difficult for me to identify these patterns due to language fossilization, the writing advisors can identify and explain them to me so that I can correct them in future. They also help enhance my academic vocabulary by teaching me academic words and expressions. However, though many of my peers in the Faculty of Education and I have a high volume of writing assignments and need extensive support, each student is only allowed to make two half-hour appointments per week, which is often insufficient. Moreover, the Writing Support Desk does not necessarily offer assistance tailored to each discipline; its three writing advisors, who each have similar academic backgrounds, serve students from all disciplines.

Problem Statement

IWCs are increasingly serving international students; however, many are using models that were designed for domestic students. Because Chinese international graduate students come from an educational and social context that differs from Western institutions, IWCs' current pedagogical approaches and designs fail to meet Chinese international students' needs and expectations in many respects. A number of studies (e.g., Blau & Hall, 2002; Cirillo-McCarthy, Del Russo, & Leahy, 2016) have been conducted on IWCs, but most focus on the writing advisors rather than the students. As a result, there are gaps in the research with regard to students' expectations of IWCs and their perception of the services provided by IWCs. Thus, it is critical to investigate the perspectives of international students to identify whether the current pedagogical approaches being utilized by IWCs are effectively supporting international students, and how IWCs can modify their approach to effectively support this population. Therefore, the current study has investigated international students' perceptions of IWCs, specifically Chinese international graduate students. This population has been chosen because they represent the largest number of international students at the target university, and because graduate students are expected to produce high quality writing and a high volume of writing, which means the benefits and shortcomings IWCs will be more apparent in this population.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Chinese international students face many of challenges when acclimating to English-language universities, particularly with respect to language barriers, cultural differences, and academic writing challenges. These challenges include critical thinking, vocabulary, tone, the mechanics of writing, and plagiarism/academic integrity. Several key factors can help them to develop their academic writing including writing courses, writing workshops, individual writing consultations, and reading. To find ideal sources on this topic, the researcher used several keywords "writing centres," "writing centres in Canada," "individual writing consultations," "one-on-one writing support," "individualized writing instruction," and "Chinese international students". In addition, the spelling of the word "centre" was alternated with "center" to accommodate for the different British and American spellings of the word. The researcher used several databases, including Google Scholar and Elsevier. Though the researcher restricted her searches to current articles published since 2009, articles published as long ago as the 1970s were used to explain some term such as language fossilization and introduce how one-on-one writing support has developed. The researcher mainly focused on scholarly journal articles published in America, Canada, and Australia because articles from these regions are related to comparative and international education, language, and literacy/ESL with a focus on higher education, second language education, and particularly to writing.

Difficulties with Overseas Study for Chinese International Students

While international students face many of the same challenges that domestic students face, they also encounter a number of additional challenges that are unique to them (Kuo & Roysircar, 2004). Two of the key challenges identified by Kim and Abreu (2001) and Huang and Klinger (2006) are language barriers and culture differences, and these challenges are primarily related to international students' adaption to a new life in host country (Zhang & Zhou, 2010; Zhou & Zhang, 2014). Many research studies (Aunurrahman, Hamied, & Emilia 2017; Singh, 2015) show that writing, especially academic writing, is also a difficulty for international graduate students especially for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in universities. Therefore, language barriers, cultural differences, and academic writing are major challenges for Chinese international students in post-secondary institutions in English-medium countries.

Language Barriers

Insufficient language competence presents challenges for international students when they start to study abroad. Limited language proficiency negatively influences Chinese international students' socialization (Zhou & Zhang, 2014), and there are a number of common errors. For example, when speaking, vocabulary recall is a major issue and slows down the communication process. Students might also not have an extensive vocabulary, and so their language may be repetitive or rely on memorization, which leads to students speaking in a monotone voice that is disinteresting. There are also language translation issues. For example, when speaking in Mandarin, the word "Tā" is used in place of both 'he' and 'she' in English. Therefore, when translating a Mandarin sentence to English that includes either 'he' or 'she', Mandarin speakers often get the two English words confused and might misspeak, thereby confusing the meaning of their

sentence. Grammatical issues associated with tenses, article, and prepositions might also create confusion. Because of the language deficiency, the sentences Chinese international students construct often consist of mistakes that lead native speakers to disengage or receive vague information.

Zhang and Zhou (2010) suggest that insufficient language ability also affects academic studies and that international students struggle to find partners in peer groups and digest assigned readings because of their limited English proficiency. The language barrier inhibits Chinese international students from talking with domestic group members efficiently. Moreover, they often get confused about content in assigned reading for courses, which increases their sense of inability to complete assignments, thereby creating a lack of confidence when they are presenting viewpoints in class. Shao and Gao (2016) conclude that many students' reticence in class can be attributed to their poor language proficiency. Chinese international students, for example, are less engaged in class activities, such as group discussions, which causes them to lose participation marks. Limited engagement in English communicative situations also causes them to miss opportunities to connect socially with native-English speakers.

In addition, understanding supervisors' requirements and suggestions with respect to thesis writing can be challenging to students with limited English proficiency (Vygotsky, 1978; Woodward-Kron, 2007). Woodward-Kron (2007) suggests that there is confusion between thesis-track students and their supervisors because of students' deficient language competence and different cultural backgrounds, as well as supervisor's lack of skills in providing clarification on things associated with language and discourse issues. Students' limited understanding of supervisors' feedback can confuse supervisors'

expectations, which makes it difficult for students to conform to and meet their supervisors' requirements. This may cause them to write texts with unrelated and discursive content, which wastes their time and energy and makes it more difficult to complete projects by the assigned due date.

Cultural Differences

Cultural differences are also a critical problem for international students, particularly with regard to socialization. Yan and Berliner (2013) state that Chinese international students' limited understanding of local cultural knowledge amplifies the negative impact of their insufficient language competence in English communicative situations. For example, international students who study in a community whose dominant religion differs from their own religious views find themselves in context where their views on religion make them a minority. This can be an issue because, as Elliott and Romito (2018) suggest, students may not be able to effectively communicate with locals if they lack knowledge of local religions and beliefs. Though international students often learn a lot about the host culture, they tend to hold different views and engage in different behaviors when they speak with foreigners because they grow up in different cultural environments. Zhou and Zhang (2014) note that international students raised in other cultures often possess differing personal values and interests, communicate in different ways, have different daily routines, and perceive social relationships in a manner that may be inconsistent with their host culture: this can "negatively influence their willingness and attempts to make close friends with domestic students" (p.13).

According to Ha and Li (2014), cultural differences make it difficult for international students to achieve academic success. For instance, under a Confucian pedagogy, maintaining the respect of one's peers is critical, and as Chinese students are often concerned about saving "mian zi" (face) in public, they may not be willing to take the risk of offering a contrary idea for fear of being wrong and embarrassing themselves in front of classmates.

Academic Writing Challenges

Hamp-Lyons and Heasley (2006) describe writing as the most difficult element of acquiring a language. Irawati (2015) notes that writing can be divided into five pivotal phases: "prewriting, drafting, editing, revising and publishing" (p. 25), which demonstrates how demanding writing skills are for students. In addition, because writing is an essential academic skill for university students, it is critical that students be able to excel at this skill (Bacha, 2002; Irawati, 2015; Lee & Tajino, 2008). Though writing skills and cultural information are taught by English for Academic Purpose teachers to help students achieve the academic level required by universities (Fajardo, 2015), there is a significant learning curve with regard to writing. Thus, it is necessary for students to receive ongoing support with regard to their writing. Al-Harbi (2011) suggests that academic writing is one of academic problems for university students to confront. Torrance, Thomas, and Robinson (1994) suggest that academic writing is a challenge especially for graduate students in universities because paper-writing is a key component of assignments. This is especially true for international students in English-dominant universities (Morton, Storch & Thompson, 2015). A number of studies have documented the asymmetry in writing between students' actual performance and post-secondary

institutions' expectations (Bacha, 2002; Beck & Jeffrey, 2009). Singh (2015) notes that though the international graduate students are deemed to be qualified language users based on IELTS, TOEFL, or other language tests, academic writing involves a higher level of writing proficiency than is required to perform well on such tests. He therefore states that even when students perform well on these tests, they often encounter a number of challenges with regard to the expectations of academic writing, and other research has found this to be especially true among Chinese international graduate students (Zhou, 2010). Thus, the scores international graduate students earn on language tests are not necessarily an accurate indicator of their ability to meet the English language proficiency standards expected of them in an academic context (Singh, 2015).

As the number of Chinese international students has risen, many studies have explored their experiences and the challenges they encounter with regard to academic writing in post-secondary institutions. Their difficulties include critical thinking, vocabulary, tone, the mechanics of writing, and plagiarism/academic integrity.

Critical thinking. One of the key limitations in Chinese international students' academic writing is the lack of critical thinking. This issue is the results of China's pedagogical approach, which employs a Confucian pedagogy that focuses on rote learning, teacher-centred approaches, and exam-orientated assessment. Though this approach has a number of benefits, it fails to develop the skills these students need to excel in an academic environment that focuses on critical thinking, student-centred pedagogies, and multi-assessments approaches (Huang & Klinger, 2006). Confucius claimed that students acquire knowledge from teachers (Tweed & Lehman, 2002), and by adopting a Confucian pedagogy, China's education system encourages students to be

modest and diligent and teaches them to follow hierarchical orders and respect authority (Bush & Qiang, 2000). Thus, teachers in China are seen as the symbols of knowledge and students consequently do not question teachers (Huang & Brown, 2009; Huang & Klinger, 2006). This approach develops memorization and enhances test taking skills, but it discourages participation in classroom discussion and critical engagement.

In the West, however, there is a reliance on student-centred pedagogies and multi-assessments approaches, both of which require critical thinking. Educational assessment aims to provide learning support (Black & William, 2012), and multi-assessment approaches are beneficial as they have the potential to help develop a broader range of skills. For example, essay assignments can help develop and assess students' learning (Cheng & Fox, 2017; Herrera, Murry & Cabral, 2007) and motivates students to develop their ability to draw upon insights of original reading materials based on their understanding and present their personal viewpoints grounded on critical thinking (Biggs & Tang, 2011). However, because of their academic backgrounds, Chinese international students struggle to adapt to multi-assessment evaluation in host countries.

As a result, China's Confucian education model creates a number of issues when these students are transferred to a Western academic context. In this context, students are expected to challenge content and offer their own insights and critical assessment; however, because they prioritize teachers' perspectives, they are reluctant to critically engage with teachers by questioning them (Fajardo, 2015). Instead, students draw upon key content and memorize it in order to get higher exam marks. Because rote memorization is their focus, their assignments are often an exercise in summary. Thus, while EFL learners may perform well on tests, they struggle with argumentative essays

(Qin & Uccelli, 2016). Because essays require more than summary, learners must develop critical thinking skills in order to offer "reasonable, reflective thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do" (Ennis, 1981, p.10). However, because these many students have not had an opportunity to develop their critical thinking skills, it is difficult for them to meet the academic expectations of a multi-assessment model.

Academic vocabulary and tone. Because an extensive academic vocabulary is essential to academic performance in post-secondary institutions (Csomay & Prades, 2018), it is critical for EFL students to overcome the challenges associated with a limited vocabulary (Al-Harbi, 2011). Con (2012) observes that "Effective vocabulary development has become a burning issue, not just in reading research, but also in writing" (p. 610), while Coxhead and Byrd (2007) note that students "need to learn to handle the whole set of characteristic vocabulary and grammar within the context of creating appropriately worded academic prose" (p. 134). In reality, successful academic performance needs learners to learn about "how to use academic vocabulary in writing as well as recognize it in reading" (Coxhead & Byrd, 2007, p. 143). Therefore, Csomay and Prades (2018) emphasize the critical role of receptive and productive skills in English learners' academic success and assert that learners should work to ensure that their understanding and application of their academic lexicon is efficient and appropriate. Con (2012) found that though learners' English is proficient, they often use academic words inaccurately, which leads to low quality writings.

Academic writing is inherently complex and must be explicit, accurate, and precise (Gillett, 2017). These features rely heavily on writers' use of academic words and therefore pose a challenge for many non-native English speakers who do not have a broad

vocabulary. Because lexical recall is critical for non-native English speakers, insufficient knowledge of a given academic lexicon can impede their success; thus, students must make an effort to learn, understand, and be able to properly utilize their discipline's academic vernacular.

Gillett (2017) also notes that the key issue with relation to tone is objectivity. Ford (2015) states that academic tone must be stressed to students before they engage in academic writing and indicates that academic writing must be objective. However, this issue makes it difficult for non-native English speakers to effectively use the proper tone in their writing. These include a learning background that does not promote tone, a lack of understanding of the appropriate use of personal pronouns, and cultural contexts.

Different learning process. As Csomay and Prades (2018) highlight, receptive skills are critical to the success of non-native English learners' studies. China's exam-oriented approach makes essential that Chinese international students be effective rote learners who can memorize complex words and phrases. However, though they can remember phrases and words used in their reading materials, they may not be able to use them effectively in their own writing. This focus on memorization does not promote a critical awareness of an objective tone, and Chinese international students may consequently be unable to employ relevant expressions in an objective fashion.

Personal pronouns. Ford (2015) also suggests that personal pronouns appear in journal articles and are commonly used in reflective writing. Under the influence of such style of writing, English learners who do not discern this specific context may use personal pronouns in their writing, unintentionally creating a subjective tone. Ford (2015) suggests that students should make a clear difference between academic style writing and

other writing, such as narratives and descriptive or reflective writing, in which subjective tones can be shown because they incorporate a variety of personal experiences.

Cultural context. Non-native English learners may also struggle to understand how tone differs from one culture to another. This is supported by Csomay and Prades (2018), who state that it is inadequate for students to simply fill their papers with academic words: they must also know how to appropriately utilize academic words and consider the context and goals of their writing. For instance, though some might consider "mental retardation" to be a proper academic term, they may not realize that it is considered to be an insulting phrase in the English-medium environment. Instead, native speakers tend to use terms like "intellectual disability". Due to their divergent cultural contexts, non-native speakers might not know that some terms are offensive because there is no explicit vocabulary instruction regarding culture context. Students can learn how to apply some words in a suitable context by incidental vocabulary learning. This occurs through a variety of activities, such as reading, class discussions, and tutorials. In addition, they can learn this kind of knowledge by talking with native-speakers.

Mechanics of writing. Fhonna's (2014) findings indicate that university students face challenges when applying multiple grammatical rules because of lacking writing practice. She therefore suggests that more writing exercise would improve their understanding of grammatical rules and in turn improve their writing skills. Biggs, Lai, Tang, and Lavelle (1999) as well as Rose and McClaffery (2001) suggest that second-language writers spend a significant amount of navigating the mechanics of writing, particularly sentence structure, grammar, and academic lexicon in order to produce writing that conforms to the Western academic standards. Matsuda (2012) also found that

written grammar is a problem for international students. Therefore, the mechanics of writing is also a significant issue for Chinese international students. Though Chinese international students are taught a bank of detailed grammatical rules, they often only use them when preparing for writing English examinations and assignments and rarely use these rules on a daily basis. Moreover, many studies have also documented that Chinese English learners take challenges concerning syntax and grammar because of negative transfer (Fa, 2010; Shi, 2015). Shi (2015) suggests that Chinese students' first language knowledge impedes second language learning because of different language features in English and Chinese, which is called negative transfer. Moreover, Fhonna (2014) states that students regularly make mistakes regarding plural nouns and use unnecessary words.

Plagiarism. When addressing some issues in academic writing, plagiarism is often a critical concern for Chinese international students. Proper citing and referencing is an exceedingly demanding skill for international students because they have a different conception of what academic integrity means and the implications of using other people's works (Amsberry, 2009). For example, Chinese students believe if their work is not being submitted for publication, there is no need to provide a citation (Bloch, 2001). Consequently, students may face serious academic penalties, such as losing marks in assignments. Thus, it is critical for higher educational institutions to voice concern about plagiarism and help students understand the nuances of academic integrity and what kind of violations constitute plagiarism. If universities do not make this effort, they will fail to cultivate the research and scholarly skill set required of students. Wittmaack (2005) notes that this is especially important as publishers reject any future papers from people who have been accused of plagiarism in the past. Thus, making a mistake with regard to

plagiarism in their new academic contexts could have lasting effects on a students' academic career.

Flowerdew and Li (2007) note that the conception of plagiarism is shaped by several aspects, including "a cultural interpretation, a developmental perspective, a disciplinary perspective, student beliefs and practices, faculty perceptions, and a focus upon antiplagiarism pedagogy" (p. 161). Amsberry (2009) notes that international students need to gain an understanding of plagiarism to avoid involuntary academic offence, so extra assistance is required. Cultural differences cause a conceptual split in the general perception of what constitutes plagiarism between domestic and international students (Amsberry, 2009). This is exemplified by the fact that in America, approximately 87% of domestic students think that copying means plagiarism, while in China, only 57% students agree with this statement (Russikoff, Fucaloro, & Salkauskiene, 2003). A survey questionnaire by Deckert (1993) indicates that even in Hong Kong, where post-secondary institutions promote Western conceptions of plagiarism, students still have a vague concept of plagiarism because of the lack of practices and training in previous educational experiences (Deckert, 1993). This potential issue is associated with inadvertent plagiarism among Chinese international students and is compounded by the fact that this population is less familiar with language re-use and has limited paraphrasing skills.

Academic Writing Development

Research has identified three approaches that enhance academic writing among students: writing groups in the form of classes (Ma, 2007; Ondrusek, 2012) and workshops (Castelló, Iñesta, & Monereo, 2009; Ma, 2007; Ondrusek, 2012), and

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individual writing consultations (Huijser et al., 2008; Ma, 2007; Ondrusek, 2012; Vygotsky, 1978; Woodward-Kron, 2007). In addition, reading academic works can develop the academic writing skills and deepen an understanding of academic expectations (Singh, 2015).

Writing Courses

Writing courses are crucial to the development of academic writing. Students can learn writing strategies by taking writing courses. The two approaches documented most in the literature on academic writing strategies are "think-then-write" and "think-while-you-write": UK instructors prioritize the "think-then-write" strategy in writing courses for postgraduates (Torrance et al., 1994, p. 390). Torrance et al. (1994) argue that this approach can be problematic because this does not provide flexibility to graduate students when they are working on projects at the tertiary level of education and advise them to implement either or a combination of both depending on different contexts. They suggest that instruction on academic writing at the graduate level should not be too prescriptive and should allow for variations in writing approaches, and "both plan- and rough draft-based writing strategies should be taught" (p. 391).

Writing courses can also make significant contribution to writing skills (Madyarov et al., 2018; Rakedzon & Baram-Tsabari, 2017). Madyarov et al. (2018) note students who finish writing courses can more effectively integrate sources into their own writing, which is a vital academic writing skill for graduate students. They conclude writing courses provide students with the ability to more effectively summarize, paraphrase, integrate direct and indirect quotes and content, and cite resources. Moreover, writing courses improve graduate students' academic writing by providing them with

training and practice opportunities specific to their disciplines. For instance, "science communication courses" pertinent to science offer essential assistance to science graduate students, which helps them to avoid the use of excessive technical language (Baram-Tsabari & Lewenstein, 2013, p. 48).

Writing Workshops

Writing workshops can help students improve their academic writing by offering writing instructional methods that may differ from traditional writing teaching approaches used in classrooms. Students can acquire specific writing skills that allow them to conform to the nuanced expectations of academic writing by attending workshops on a wide range of diverse topics where they can engage in practical writing activities. For example, the University of Windsor's Writing Support Desk (n.d.) not only offers workshops on general writing issues—such as tenses, sentence structure, punctuation, and transitions—but more specific topics, such as research proposal outlines, abstracts, essay structure, graduate school applications, and citing and referencing. Thus, the workshops provide general and basic writing skills but also provide foundation for academic writing. The theme-oriented writing workshops help students acquire the relative writing skills with in-depth instruction. In addition, academic writing advisors explain students' common writing problems and present the corresponding solutions. This can encourage students to reflect on their writing practices and provide them with an understanding of the mechanics of writing and the expectations of academic writing so as to improve the quality of their writing. To be specific, students registered in the same programs can improve their disciplinary writing through collaboration and group discussions. For instance, partners can teach one another words related to their specific

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disciplines. Writing workshops provide attendees with ample opportunity to encounter others in the same majors, which creates opportunities for collaborative learning and the establishment of writing groups. Writing workshops are not like the traditional writing courses where teachers transfer writing skills to students by constant writing practice. Instead, they are open-door or open-house events that create a relatively stress-free learning environment, and they focus on practical examples that students encounter when writing to fulfill academic writing assignments.

Additionally, writing workshops provide students with an opportunity to meet academic writing advisors, who often encourage students to seek individual support in the form of IWCs.

Individual Writing Consultations

According to Ma (2017), individual writing consultations can help students develop academic writing since they can help students find which part needs to be improved. She also notes that writing advisors can diagnose students' issues, which may include ineffective transition words, incorrect grammatical usage, and inappropriate vocabulary choices. For example, she suggests that a Japanese student may not realize that her writing lacks cohesion until a writing advisor points out that her means of ordering content differs from English users. Native speakers may, for instances, put information in the topic sentence and then outline background information by adding new information in supporting sentences; in contrast, Japanese students will begin with an exhaustive background before stating the purpose of their research (Ma, 2017).

Individual writing consultations can help students improve their academic writing skills by building their writing confidence. This is supported by Ma (2017), whose

participants indicated that attending IWCs reduced their anxiety and enhanced their confidence when writing graduate work. In a study conducted by O'Mahony, Verezub, Dalrymple, and Bertone (2013), the participants reported that engaging with IWCs helps them establish writing confidence. A significant number of new consultation attendees are dependent on the writing advisor to ensure their writing conforms to academic standards (O'Mahony et al., 2013). This may be due to the fact that they do not have the ability to cope with the intense self-doubt that is common among those lack proficient writing skills (Cameron, Nairn, & Higgins, 2009). Self-doubt can lead to an obsessive need to repeatedly revise and rewrite texts; consequently, it is difficult for them to complete writing assignments. Cultivating independent writers with confidence and competence, who are able to self-edit their own paper is a primary goal of IWC; thus, they are designed to offer systematic feedback (O'Mahony et al., 2013). Writing confidence can be built by praising some parts of students' writing to help develop their confidence. Writing consultants can encourage students to confidently apply their own writing skills and strategies to express themselves via writing. In addition, consultants' acknowledgement of students writing skills can motivate them to make continual progress, which is part of the reason that IWCs are beneficial for students' academic writing advancement.

Reading

Extensive reading can develop academic writing. King (2000) notes that "reading is the creative centre of a writer's life" and if people do not "have time to read", then they do not "have the time (or the tools) to write" (p. 167). He advocates that his proficient

writing is a consequence of reading habits. Brown (2004) proposes that "The key to successful writing is reading, and more reading, and even more reading" (p. 330).

First, reading can help students expand written vocabulary and strengthen language knowledge as it provides students a platform to learn new words. This is supported by Cunningham and Stanovich (1990), who note written texts often feature a more extensive vocabulary than that featured in daily conversations. Likewise, Chafe and Danielewicz (1987) observe that "people write differently from the way they speak" (p. 83). Thus, reading can make an important contribution to vocabulary accumulation, which can improve their writing.

Second, reading strengthens grammatical knowledge, which is critical for writing. Fhonna (2014) states that university students' most frequent mistakes in free writing are verb agreement and word forms. Therefore, the lack of grammatical knowledge can negatively influence writing. Looking through sentences constructed based on rules of grammar conventions can provide multiple and varied examples for students, which in turn enriches their understanding of grammar. There are also complex sentences in reading materials that show students how to flexibly apply grammar rules. Reading these sentences can raise students' familiarity with grammatical rules and benefits students' memorization of these rules.

Third, reading exposes writers to different writing with respect to expressions, sentence structures, and paragraph organization. Singh (2015) proposes that the most important approach for international university graduate students to address their difficult academic writing is to make continual process and to strive to express themselves in different ways. After extensive reading, students can imitate other writers' experienced

usage, sentence structures, rhetorical devices, and academic style to improve the variety of sentence patterns and the flexibility of language expression in their writing. When they want to compose texts, relevant expressions they have read can inform how they express themselves, helping them become more developed writers.

Limitations of Previous Research

A myriad of studies on IWCs explore the view of directors or the staff; however, there are far fewer studies that focus on students' opinions. It is therefore necessary to examine the impact that IWCs have on students' academic writing, which can be done by exploring students' IWC experiences. Based on students' evaluation, the writing support program administrators can tailor the IWC to students who actually use it.

A review of relevant literature outlines whether content such as fixing grammar should be included in IWCs. Prior research primarily focuses on the central question of whether writing advisors should provide editorial/proofreading support like correcting grammatical errors in students' writing and simply help to improve the product of writing, or tutorial support that helps to improve the writing ability of the writer (Fhonna, 2014; Kim, 2018, Min 2016, Myers, 2003; Phillips, 2013; Woodward-Kron, 2007). To be specific, some writing specialists debate over whether they should provide help at a sentence level regardless of students' linguistic needs. Without considering the implication of this, writing advisors might excessively interpose on ESL students' writing, thereby improving the written texts rather than improving students' writing ability (Myers, 2003).

Moreover, some research has focused on how foreign or second language (L2) learners' academic writing improves with the assistance of IWCs. Though many articles

on IWCs explore the perspectives of faculty and writing advisors, few studies investigated students' concerns and opinions. Therefore, as Phillips (2013) notes, there is a limited amount of research pertaining to how to effectively support multilingual graduate students, and there are few studies that explore multilingual students' perceptions of IWCs. Since IWCs' primary focus has been supporting native-English-speaking undergraduates, this gap requires thorough investigation if IWCs are to develop effective approaches to supporting international students. Thus, the current study seeks to address this gap by studying Chinese international education students' experiences with and perceptions of IWCs.

Research Questions

The study seeks to explore two research questions:

1. What are Chinese international graduate students' opinions of IWCs?

2. How can IWCs improve their service so as to better benefit Chinese international graduate students?

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

A qualitative research approach was used to answer the current study's research questions. To ensure that the method was effective, it was critical to determine the specific research design, who the participants were, and how data should be collected and analyzed. It was also critical to evaluate any ethical concerns.

Research Design

Like other studies, the current research sought to help identify the deficiencies of IWCs and how IWCs have coped with these issues; however, it is unique in that it focuses on students' experiences and perceptions of IWCs. Creswell (2013) suggests a qualitative research method contributes to developing a detailed understanding of participants' perspectives because it allows students to use their own words, which deepens the analysis of the complexity present in varied opinions. Furthermore, Creswell (2013) defines case study research as

> a qualitative approach in which the investigators explore a real-life, contemporary bounded systems (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information, and reports a case description and case themes (p. 110).

Yin (2014) notes that case studies can help people to grasp a deep and detailed understanding of the phenomenon because talking with a small group of potential participants and exploring their perspectives is an effective way to gain detailed insights. Semi-structured, one-on-one interviews are ideally suited to this purpose. Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle (2006) state that "qualitative research approaches collect data

through observations, interviews, and documents analysis" before summarizing "the findings primarily through narrative or verbal means" (p. 15). In addition, Schensual, Schensual, and Lecompte (1999) note that "semi-structured interviews combine the flexibility of the unstructured, open-ended interview with the directionality and agenda of the survey instrument to produce focused, qualitative, textual data at the factor level" (p. 149). In the interview process, open-ended questions guide participants, encouraging them to describe their views. This is ideal for the current study as the participants' experiences are unique and specific to their particular writing issues. Member checking was also used. After completion of the interview, the researcher sent transcripts of the interviews to participants by email within two weeks of the interview. Participants had the opportunity to edit their transcripts to ensure their perspectives were accurately represented. Participants sent back their edited transcript within 15 days from the date of receiving the researcher's email. The researcher received the feedback transcript, and the participant's email information was immediately deleted.

Context and Participants

This study was conducted in UWindsor's Faculty of Education. Participants were selected by using purposive sampling as it helped the researcher purposefully choose individuals and gain an understanding of the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2015). Because the current study aimed to examine how Chinese international students perceive individual writing consultations at university, and to determine the advantages and disadvantages of IWCs with regard to the service they deliver to Chinese international Master's-level students, the participants were 9 Chinese international graduate students who were taking or who had finished the Master of Education program within the past

three years at UWindsor and who each still lived in the region. The current study looked at case studies Based on time restraints, research design, and available resources relating to recruitment, the interview process, and transcription, it was deemed that any more than 12 participants would be unfeasible; however, any less than seven would not provide enough data to draw reliable conclusions. Thus, the researcher decided to recruit between 7-12 participants. This population was ideal because they were required by professors to improve their compositional skills and deepen their learning through frequent writing assignments. Thus, they often utilize IWCs to support them in their writing-intensive courses. As a result, many received extensive support from IWCs throughout their academic studies. It was important to examine students' needs and evaluate the present IWCs in Canadian universities to enhance IWCs' service. To this end, students' reflections on and insights into IWCs can provide administrators with the data required to improve IWCs and satisfy Chinese international education graduate students' demands with regard to their academic writing. These purposeful participants presented opinions that can contribute to an understanding of IWCs and offer readers a deeper understanding of them. In this research, all the participants have been enrolled in education programs and are Chinese. With one exception, the interviews were conducted in Mandarin. As one native Cantonese speaker/participant was more comfortable speaking English than Mandarin, her interview was conducted in English. The remaining participants spoke Mandarin so as to express themselves more clearly.

Recruitment was a simple process as many of the potential participants were easily contacted via WeChat, a popular social media app among Chinese international graduate students. Many Chinese international graduate students in the education

program have joined in in the same WeChat discussion group, where users post useful information in discussion groups to help each other. Such a group was used to directly post participant recruitment information. Students who wanted to volunteer for interviews directly contacted the researcher by adding the researcher as their friends in the WeChat discussion group. A letter of information in English (see Appendix B) was sent to participants before each interview. If participants were willing to participate in this interview, a 30-minute in-person interview was scheduled. Participants were required to read Letter of Informatio and keep a copy of it. They were also asked to sign the Consent Form (see Appendix A & C) before being interviewed.

Data Collection

The data collection included in-person interviews with volunteer participants, which were held at the site convenient for the participant. Interviews were conducted in either Mandarin or English, depending on the participants' preferences. There are some guided interview questions regarding the individual writing consultations offered by UWindsor for students to answer (see Appendix D). These questions investigated how many times they used the service, why they used it, and what they expected to get from the service. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes. The researcher had piloted the use of the questions and found that 30 minutes was sufficient. Interviewees were told that they could skip questions that they were unwilling or uncomfortable answering before each interview. In some instances, probing questions were asked to clarify their answers or get additional insights from interviewees. The responses to semi-structured interviews were audio recorded with a digital device and the researcher also took field notes to capture interviewees' body language and expressions to supplement the

recording data. All collected data were stored on the researcher's computer and only the

researcher had access to them. All data collection relied primarily on interviews: this is

consistent with Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle's (2006) evaluations of the value of the

interview. They suggest that "the interview might be the major data collection tool of the

study (particularly when the behavior of interest cannot be easily observed)" (p. 121).

Data Analysis

Participants' responses were transcribed into Word files and sent to participants.

They sent back their edited transcripts to the researcher to ensure their perspectives were

accurately represented. Then the files in Chinese were translated into English by the

researcher. Additionally, the transcriptions were sent back to participants to ensure their

perspectives were accurately represented, though the translations were not member

checked. The researcher is fluent in both English and Chinese, which ensured the

translations accurately reflected the participants' perspectives. The researcher categorized

the data into segments on the basis of different questions. In addition, similar responses to

the questions were put together in order to develop a comprehensive grasp of the patterns

developed so as to answer the research questions.

Data Coding

To code the interview data, the researcher browsed through all transcripts at the

outset and made notes about the general impressions. The researcher carefully and

thoroughly reread each transcript and coded relevant information. For the purposes of the

current study, "relevant" information was information that was repeated and information

that the interviewees independently identified as important. Though earlier the proposal

discussed the ways that a Confucian pedagogy has shaped how Chinese international

students interact with Canadian teachers, it was possible that some participants might avoid answering some interview questions because they were embarrassed or did not wish to criticize their writing advisors in the individual writing consultations. In order to ensure they can share more information about the academic support they have received, the researcher shared some of her personal experiences relating to her search for different forms of writing support at her university, including their merits and demerits, which put participants at ease with respect to sharing similar information. The researcher also explained the reason why she was conducting the research and that the results aimed to develop recommendations to improve the service for future students. After the coding was completed, the researcher determined what information was most important and created categories by bringing several codes together. The researcher then labeled categories and decided which were most relevant and how they were connected to each other. The purpose of this data analysis was to determine which categories had similarities, which had differences, and how each was connected. Throughout the process, the researcher tried to be unbiased, creative, and open-minded in order to organize and examine the coding and answer the current study's research questions.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

Introduction

To explore how these education master students viewed IWCs at UWindsor, data were collected on seven key aspects:

1. the importance of writing in their program of study,

2. the utilization of IWCs,

3. their reasons for using and their expectations of IWCs,

4. preferences regarding writing advisors,

5. the potential influence IWCs had on their writing skills,

6. the benefits and limitations of IWCs, and

7. their suggestions for improving IWCs.

The data analysis was categorized into these seven aspects. To protect privacy and confidentiality of participants, the nine participants will be referred to as P1, P2, P3, … P9 respectively(see Table 1). All the participants used the IWC offered by UWindsor. They were taking a two-year graduate program in the Faculty of Education at UWindsor or had completed this program in the three years prior to the interview. The research has been cleared by the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board.

Table 1

Participant Profile

Participants	Date of Program Completion	Stream	Field of Study
P1	2017.12	Course-based	Edcucational Administration
P2	2018. 12	Course-based	Second Language Acquisition

P3	2018.12	Course-based	Second Language Acquisition
P4	2019. 04	Major Paper	Second Language Acquisition
P5	In Process	Major Paper	Edcucational Administration
P6	2018.12	Course-based	Second Language Acquisition
P7	2018.01	Thesis-based	Curriculum Studies
P8	2018.05	Thesis-based	Curriculum Studies
P9	2018.12	Course-based	Second Language Acquisition

The Importance of Writing in the Master of Education Program

Although these participants' academic experiences with this program differed, they gave the same answer to the first interview question, which inquired about importance of writing in their program (see Table 2). Each participant responded that writing was extremely important in their program because their writing influenced their knowledge application and development as well as the demonstration of academic achievements. In addition, writing was also a central assessment tool that was used to measure their understanding and in turn influenced their grades. P9 also reported that writing influenced her understanding of the course text that she was required to read, and, by developing effective writing habits, she improved her reading comprehension. This proved essential to maximizing her learning.

Table 2

The Importance of Writing in the Master of Education Program

		P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
Critical engagement				✔						

Assessment tool	Understanding course content			✔				✔		
	Demonstrating research work								✔	
	Ability to develop an argument				✔				✔	
Reading comprehension						✔				✔

Critical Engagement

One participant emphasized that writing promoted her critical thinking ability. For example, P3 noted that writing was important for her because it deepened her understanding of and critical engagement with learning materials. She responded that in order to write essays about learning content, she had to clearly understand the content. In order to finish the relevant literature review of essays, P3 was provided with an opportunity to read other scholars' articles. She responded that though students who followed the course-based stream, like her, should have a deepened comprehension of lesson content through teachers' lectures, language barriers sometimes prevent this form of information transfer. However, writing essays required her to do more readings, which in turn encouraged her to strengthen understanding, thereby facilitating her critical engagement. P3 also stated that this provided a foundation for the development of her own perspectives. P3 went on to state that writing essays encourages her to do further research to explore consistent or contrary positions; thus, she thought she did not

critically think about learning content until she wrote out essays. Therefore, writing was a crucial element for her understanding of and critical engagement with lesson content. Though P3 went into detail about this particular value, none of the other participants mentioned this.

Assessment Tool

In UWindsor's Master of Education program, essays and other writing assignments are primary tools through which instructors assess students' achievement and determine whether they have met the learning goals of a given course. Arbee and Samuel (2015) state that writing, as an essential educational literacy practice, plays a vital assessment vehicle that is commonly used in post-secondary education institutions. All the participants suggested that writing influenced their grades as they were each assigned grades according to their written assignments. As a result, how well students do in academic writing decides whether they can successfully pass courses and influences their progression as well as graduation (Archer, 2010). P4 responded that she was constantly writing different essays after starting her classes until they ended. This was echoed by all participants. For example, P2 and P6 stated that they did not have exams and that the final mark of each course was primarily decided based upon written submissions. P5 likewise suggested that these course teachers evaluated essay assignments based on the content and quality of essays, as well as writing style.

Writing is used to not only decide students' grades but also convey an understanding of course content, demonstrate critical literacy/research skills, and illustrate their ability to critically engage with content and develop arguments.

Understanding course content. Writing is a critical way to show instructors an understanding of weekly course readings. For instance, P3 responded that written assignments included personal insights, critical reflection, and questions regarding weekly course readings and teachers' lectures. P3 added that unless her instructor required her to write a response to course readings, she did not develop a thorough understanding of the readings. In order to digest that, P3 carefully read assigned articles, asked instructors for explanations and clarification, and listened openly to opinions that differed from her own during the discussion of the readings. The completion of these learning tasks deepened P3's understanding of course readings, which was reflected in written assignments. This was especially true for P7, who stated that writing was the most important way to present the learning outcomes. As Richardson (2004) notes, writing is an essential instrument that student must use effectively to demonstrate that their understanding conforms to courses' objectives.

Demonstrating research work. As a requirement of being in the thesis stream, P8 completed a master's thesis. This required her to conduct extensive research, including reviewing relevant literature, designing methodology, and applying to the Research Ethic Board for approval. She also had to recruit and interview participants and then transcribe, translate, and analyze her participants' answers before expressing her findings. Thus, writing was essential to her academic success as it allowed her to demonstrate her ability to conduct and analyze research.

Ability to develop an argument. According to P4 and P8, writing was also central to demonstrating their abilities to develop arguments. For example, P4 noted that when she took a six-week course—Approaches to Literacy Development—she was

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required to keep an ongoing reading summary/critical response document. The first page contained a descriptive snap shot of the key points outlined by the authors of each assigned reading, and the second page included her critical academic response. She stated that, according to her assignment prompts, her critical academic response was expected to include a thesis, reasons to support her thesis, and evidence to support her reasoning. Having to do this twice a week and receiving feedback allowed students to refine their ability to develop and support a clear thesis/argument. This was also true for P8, who said she used writing to present her perspective of learning materials and that the process of writing instilled her with the skills necessary to develop arguments. This is consistent with Liu (2015), who suggests that writing articles requires students to develop an understanding of appropriate vocabulary and to think critically of the subject, which in turn helps them develop ways to support their arguments.

Reading Comprehension

Participants also reported that writing improved their reading comprehension skills. For instance, P9 stated that as her writing skills improved, her reading comprehension likewise improved. During the writing process, P9 said that she studied how to construct more complicated and nuanced sentences, which allowed her to clearly express herself. Once she developed these skills, P9 found that when she encountered similar sentence structures in her reading, she was able to understand the article's content more clearly. Thus, developing writing skills enhanced her reading comprehension. Though P5 did not go into significant detail, she also reported that her reading comprehension improved as a result of improving her writing abilities.

The Utilization of IWCs

When asked how often they utilized their university's IWC, the participants answered that there was significant variance in usage, both with respect to how soon they started using the service during their graduate studies, and how frequently they utilized the service.

Initial and Continued Use

Six of the nine participants started to use the service in their first term; however, P1 and P4 stated they started using the service during their second term. When asked why, they said that they had not known about the service before, until their classmates recommended the service to them. P9 also reported that she did not use the service during her first term; however, this was because she was enrolled in classes that did not have significant writing requirements. The remaining participants had all used the service during their first term. It is important to note that once they began using the service, all of the participants continued to use it until graduating.

Frequency

Though each of the participants used the service continually through to graduation, the frequency with which they used it varied. To ensure all students on campus have equal access to the service, UWindsor's IWC has a policy that allows students only two appointments per week and only one on a given day. Thus, participants were not able to use the service more than twice a week. Three of the participants—P7, P8, and P9— indicated that they always used their maximum allowable appointments each week, while P3 and P6 stated that as usual they used the service at least one time per week early in the term and twice a week toward the end of the term, which coincided with the due dates of final projects. Other participants used the service less often. For example, P1 used it

approximately ten times each term; however, she sometimes wanted to use the service more than twice in a week. Therefore, she sometimes used friends' student accounts to book more appointments. P5 booked approximately six appointments per term, while P2 and P4 booked approximately four appointments each term. Thus, six of the nine participants used the service weekly or nearly weekly and were likely to use the service twice a week, and though the remaining three used it less often, they did use it consistently and with regularity.

Reasons for Using and Expectations of IWCs

Participants had various reasons for attending and expectations of IWCs (see Table 3). P1, P2, and P6 responded that their expectations varied depending on writing advisors. Some writing advisors focused solely on the mistake reduction with regard to grammar, expressions, and vocabulary, and coherence; these advisors seldom focused on the content. Other writing advisors paid attention to both the quality of writing and the content. The former focused on editing the writing and consequently went through larger portions of the work; the latter provided more guidance on structure and content and thus corrected smaller portions of the writing but helped to shape the entirety of the work. However, P6 suggested that she expected writing advisors to focus more on the content rather than simply correcting her mistakes, and she expected writing advisors to provide more detailed suggestions, such as how to narrow down her topic and how to support her topic. Thus, participants often made a point of choosing to work with different writing advisors according to their individual expectations.

These expectations included support with assignment instruction, brain storming, and essay construction/organization. Participants also sought support for the mechanical

elements of the writing process, specifically grammar and sentence structure. They likewise wanted assistance with word choices as they wanted their language to be accurate and to ensure that their expressions would be understood by native English readers. Given their concern for native English-speaking audiences understanding them, the participants also sought help for presentations, specifically PowerPoint slides. Moreover, because their new academic context brought new expectation with regard to citing and referencing, the participants made appointments to get support for APA citing and referencing. These are the specific reasons that the participants observed; however, in more general terms, they likewise noted that they booked IWC with the hope of increasing their grades and confidence.

Table 3.

Participants' Reasons for Using and Expectations of IWCs

		P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
Assignment instruction	*Understanding Assignment Instructions*		✔				✔			
	Understanding terminology	✔								
Brainstorming		✔	✔							

Construction and organization	✓	✓							
English grammar skills			✓	✓			✓		✓
Sentence structures					✓	✓		✓	
Lexicon and idiomatic expression			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Presentation						✓			
Formatting, citing and referencing	✓	✓					✓		
Improving grades			✓	✓	✓			✓	
Confidence						✓			

Assignment Instruction

With regard to assignment instruction, the participants collectively observed that they needed support when interpreting instructions and with the nuances of core vocabulary.

Understanding Assignment Instructions. P2 and P6 suggested that one reason they attended IWCs was to obtain some ideas about how to begin writing assignments. They reported that they sometimes did not understand the assignment guidelines and the expectations of Western academic standards. When students gain access to university programs, they have no idea for disciplinary writing expectations (Graves, 2016). For example, P6 was required to write academic genre summaries and descriptive/critical voice assignments in a course. The instructor required her to apply an insightful and logical application of a critical lens to analyze class resources and use other sources that will be used to support her views. Although some assignment guidelines were provided, no set formula was offered. Moreover, coming from a Confucian pedagogy, P6 had never written a critical reflection like this and therefore had not had an opportunity to develop the critical thinking skills necessary to complete such an assignment. Thus, she was unsure about what kinds of information should be included. This is consistent with the literature review, which found that international students had difficulties understanding writing requirements and conforming to the assignment guidelines. As a result, some participants wrote content that was not related to or did not fulfill the assignment requirements. To address this issue, P6 brought the assignment instruction to her IWC and asked the writing advisors what should be included. This was consistent with P2's experiences as she also reported that she sought writing advisors' guidance on assignment requirements and expected writing advisors to identify whether she was conforming to the assignment guidelines and meeting its requirements.

Understanding terminology (e.g., racism). Though some of the participants understood the assignment instructions, they often struggled to understand some of the

terminology included in the assignment. Thus, while they may have understood that they have to do a critical analysis or a comparative essay, they did not understand the themes or theories being discussed. For example, P1 attended IWCs because she had difficulty understanding the terminology of course textbook content, such as racism. P1 recalled that she needed to write an essay about racism; however, having come from a relatively homogenous society, she did not understand the nuances of racism. Though P1 had asked her instructor about this, the instructor did not have enough time to explain racism in class. To get the support she needed, P1 booked an IWC and showed the writing advisors the content on racism in the textbook, asking them to clarify it for her. Given that Chinese international students are introduced to terms that are uncommon in China—such as gender binaries, heteronormativity, and patriarchy—this kind of support often proves critical to the success of Chinese international students.

Brainstorming

In addition to helping students understand their assignment instruction, writing advisors also provided them with useful information to inspire them to think widely and deeply about their assignments. For example, P1 and P2 said that before writing essays they attended IWCs because they wanted to get some new ideas. They sought writing advisors' suggestions for topic choices because they did not want to work on a topic that was difficult to write, too discursive, or outside the parameters of the assignment criteria. P1 suggested that writing advisors recommended her easy topics to write and then she selectively accepted their suggestions. After completion of essays, P1 and P2 expected writing advisors to add new ideas to their essays. P2 responded that she expected writing advisors to think out more supporting ideas for P2 to better support P2's main idea.

Though the UWindsor's Writing Support Desk (WSD) does offer help with brainstorming, the students may be disappointed if they expect the advisors to offer new ideas to support their arguments as this is outside of the scope of what the service aims to do (J. Horn, personal communication, June 25, 2019). Though writing advisors may ask questions to encourage students to think critically about different approaches, they will not provide students with ideas or arguments as this would undermine the academic integrity of a student's work (J. Horn, personal communication, June 25, 2019).

P2 highlighted an additional concern: not all of the writing advisors were familiar with the academic background of her topic. She reported that after asking for support or guidance, some of the writing advisors knew little or nothing of the topic. Consequently, they were unable to offer any direction. This highlights a key issue with IWC services. Though the WSD has qualified staff, most have a background in English literature specifically. In addition, each advisor has a different level of experience working with students from different disciplines. Therefore, when supporting students in different fields, not all of the advisors will be able to offer the same level of support. This was reinforced by suggestions offered by P3 and P9, who found that some advisors were able to offer more guidance related to their discipline than others.

Construction and Organization

After developing their ideas, some of the participants reported that they sought help from writing advisors with regard to organizing their ideas, both within the context of a sentence or paragraph and within the broader context of the essay structure itself. This is critical to construct complete sentences and paragraphs that clearly express one's intent and then placing these paragraphs in a logical sequence that support their

arguments. For instance, P1 reported that her ideas were often fragmented and were not clearly linked. After explaining her concern to writing advisors, they showed her how she could reorder words in a sentence, sentences in a paragraph, and paragraphs in a paper. They also explained how these changes could clarify her position and allow her to scaffold her ideas to build a stronger argument. As a result, she felt these changes would help her writing conform to the expectations that native speakers would have when reading her work. This is also especially true for P2, who responded that she wanted writing advisors to help organize her sequence of ideas in her essays to create a logical and continuous flow of clear ideas throughout the essay. For her, a key factor was using effective transition words to link sentence to sentences and paragraphs.

English Writing/Grammar Skills

Four of the participants noted that they visited the WSD to improve their understanding of English grammar and thereby enhance their writing skills. For example, P3 and P9 suggested that they attended IWCs because they thought they had limited English language proficiency and lacked academic writing experience or skills. This is supported by Rose and McClafferty (2015), who found that international students lack experience with English academic writing, and developing these vital academic writing skills poses challenges for them. P3 and P9 said that they believed that writing advisors would provide them with solutions to the challenges they encountered when writing. This might be an issue related to vocabulary. For example, P9 suggested that she did not know the difference between the word "study" and "learn"; however, the writing advisor explained the nuanced difference between them.

These concerns were repeated by P4 and P7. For example, P4 said that she used some inappropriate prepositions and pieces of punctuation and did not realize her errors until the writing advisors pointed them out. P4 added that this was critical for her development as a writer because non-native speakers like her often cannot identify their grammatical mistakes and therefore need support from writing advisors in this regard. P7 responded that, rather than simply watching writing advisors correct her mistakes, she preferred to listen to writing advisors to explain the mistakes she made so that she could understand how to effectively use punctuation and conjunctions. For example, when creating lists, P7 did not know how to use the Oxford comma until a writing advisor explained it to her. P7 responded that she expected writing advisors to provide tutorial support that helps to improve the writing ability of the writer rather than editorial support that helps to improve the product of writing.

Sentence Structures

Several of the participants sought support for sentence structure specifically. P5 responded that she used IWCs because she struggles constructing sentences. She noted that she would first create a sentence in her mother tongue and then translate the words into English. As a result, there were a lot of Chinglish sentences in P5's essays. Therefore, P5 attended IWCs so writing advisors could rephrase her Chinglish sentences in a manner that was more consistent with common English usage. Likewise, P6 and P8 reported that though they had the necessary vocabulary and the words to correctly express their thoughts, they found that the sentences they made sometimes did not correctly express their thoughts. Therefore, P6 and P8 sought support from writing advisors to create sentence structures that effectively expressed their intent.

Lexicon and Idiomatic Expression

Participants also reported that they sought help to develop their vocabulary and academic lexicon. For example, P5, P7, P8, and P9 suggested that they attended IWCs because they did not always know how to appropriately use words in their essays. For example, P5 noted that she used qualifiers such as "very," and writing advisors recommended using a more academic phrasing. P5 also reported that she made homonymic spelling mistakes, and writing advisors offered corrections. In addition, P7 reported that she expected to learn how to replace non-academic words by using academic words, while P8 and P9 responded that they expected to be able to use appropriate academic words to accurately express themselves in their writing. Participants also struggled to use appropriate idiomatic expressions. For instance, P3, P4, P5, and P9 responded that they expected to study more idiomatic ways of expression and write like a native speaker. For example, the word 'besides' was sometimes used incorrectly. P8 specifically responded that she expected writing advisors could help her identify whether a native speaking reading audience could understand her essays. With the support of writing advisors, P8 rephrased ambiguous sentences/paragraphs in her essays so as to clearly express herself to her native speaking audience. This support helped the participants address issue associated with their use of language and word choice.

Presentation

Participants sometimes got help that they did not expect, particularly with respect to how to format engaging PowerPoint presentations. When P6 sought help for her PowerPoint slides, she booked an IWC hoping to correct her punctuation and grammar

errors in each slide. However, the writing advisor also taught her how to reduce her word count and make her writing more concise. P6 also stated that some of the writing advisors had extensive proficiency with PowerPoint and helped her make her slides more organized and engaging by incorporating images. She learned some of the features available in PowerPoint that she was not aware of.

Formatting, Citing and Referencing

In addition to support with their writing, participants also needed support navigating the citing and referencing standards and expectations that were new to them. For Chinese international graduate students, Canada is a new academic context that brings new expectation regarding citing and references. For example, P1 stated that she went to writing advisors to seek advice on how to format her papers so that they conformed to APA standards as she was not required to use a specific formatting style. This required instruction on how to format the page headers, headings and subheadings, and title page, among other formatting issues. This required both instruction on the actual requirements and help with how to operate the Word program to create proper formatting. P1 likewise needed help with citation, which P2 reported was an issue for her as well. After P2 finished an assignment, she always had a number of questions regarding how to cite sources; thus, she would book appointments with writing advisors to ensure her citations were consistent with APA citing standards. She learned when 'and' was used in place of '&' depending on where authors' names were parentheses. She was also taught when to use 'et al.' and when to include page numbers, among other concerns. Like P1 and P2, P7 said that she attended IWCs to correct improper citations, but she also sought help with references. For example, she was unclear when to capitalize words and what

parts of the reference required italicization. While none of these tasks relate to grammar, the WSD has identified them as part of the writing process (J. Horn, personal communication, June 2, 2019) and therefore offer support with each of these issues.

Improving Grades

P3, P4, P5, and P8 reported that they started to attend IWCs because she failed to get high grades in final papers. Thus, they expected to get higher marks by submitting writing advisor's editorial work. P4 responded that she expected English native speakers to clearly understand her essays after writing advisors edited them, which was important to her as many of her instructors were native speakers. She assumed that if other native speakers could clearly understand her writing, then her instructors would also understand it, which would lead to improved grades. This suggests that, though many of the participants attended consultations simply because they wanted to become more proficient writers, there were external motivators that influenced this choice as well.

Confidence

In addition to improving grades, participants also reported attending IWCs to help improve their confidence. This was reflected in P6's response. She noted that to provide a proof of English language proficiency before she began studying in an English-speaking country, she was required to take the IELTS examination, which tested her writing, reading, speaking, and listening skills. P6 responded that the lowest writing scores made her believe that her essays included many mistakes. Therefore, she needed writing advisors' assistance. P6 added that she needed writing advisor to help her to express herself in English and wanted writing advisors to help her express herself. Because of her low writing score on the IELTS, she was self-conscious during the writing process, which

made it stressful for her and impeded her work. This proved especially problematic because the timing of the due dates necessitated that she writes a lot of content in a short period of time, compounding her stress. However, with the support of the writing advisors, she was able to increase her confidence, easing her stress and allowing her to focus on her content rather than letting the writing process impede her work.

Preferences Regarding Writing Advisors

The booking system utilized by the WSD allowed student to see who their appointments were with; thus, participants were allowed to freely choose which writing advisors they wanted to work with. However, there were some restrictions with regard to availability and time. Some of the participants had clear preferences with regard to who they wanted to work with, which highlighted what expectations they had and some of the potential shortcomings of the service. For example, P1 and P3 suggested that they preferred to work with different writing advisors when they began an assignment to facilitate the brainstorming process and develop more ideas. P6 responded that she worked with different writing advisors and she chose writing advisors according to what kind of help she needed with assignments and deadlines. For example, she might book appointments with one advisor to get help with APA citing and referencing and book with a different advisor to get help with editing. With the exception of P6, all the participants responded that they preferred to work with the same writing advisor and they identified several reasons: efficiency, consistency, and familiarity. However, the participants noted that writing advisors' individual availability sometimes inhibited this. Though they each preferred specific advisors, they did not all prefer the same advisor and had different reasons for preferring one advisor to another.

Efficiency

P1, P2, and P5 responded that working on the same essay with the same writing advisor is more efficient because writing advisors did not need time to read the essay in appointments following the first appointments. P1 stated that each appointment only lasts thirty minutes, so writing advisors could only look through 4 or 5 pages. P1 needed to continue to book appointments because many essays for education students are at least 8 pages. P1 and P5 responded that the same writing advisors did not have to spend time reading the editorial part before editing the rest part, and P5 added that, though the time intervals between appointments are long, the same writing advisors would recall what they edited after scanning essays. P2 stated that booking with the same advisor meant that she did not need to spend time explaining the assignment instruction and the edited part, thereby allowing the writing advisors to directly continue where they had left off.

Consistency

P1, P2 and P9 also reported that working with the same writing advisor could ensure the essay was consistently edited with regard to the language and writing style. Conflicts may arise as some advisors may have different approaches or preferences for organization or wording. Booking with the same advisor ensured that the work would be consistent in this regard.

Familiarity

When the writing advisors saw the same student repeatedly, they quickly became familiar with what kinds of mistakes students made and could anticipate the errors as well as their intent, which improved the editorial suggestions and instruction they offered. This was articulated by P2, though P9 offered more details about this process. She stated

that the writing advisor she visited most often learned her writing style and gained a better understanding of her writing problems. Therefore, P9 reported that she thought the writing advisors could provide her with specific support. For example, writing advisors found that non-academic words were often used in P9's essays, and they would focus more on her usage of words. P9 also mentioned that working with the same writing advisors developed a good relationship between students and writing advisors. Bush and Redding (2018) validate the fact that students develop personal relationships with instructors when receiving one-on-one writing instruction. P9 likewise reported that she thought that students were more willing to attend IWCs and increased their confidence in writing because they believed in writing advisors.

Availability

Because of the regulation that each student is allowed only one appointment in a given day and two appointments in a given week, all participants suggested that if their preferred advisor had no available appointments, or they had to rush to finish editing essays, they sometimes chose to work with other writing advisors. P2 reported that because of limited appointments and her and writing advisors' tight schedules, especially at the end of each term, she worked with different writing advisors, though she was eager to work with the same writing advisors.

Specific Preferences

Although the participants' preferred to work with the same writing advisors, their preferred advisors differed. In order to identify which writing advisor better supported them, P3, P4, P5, and P9 booked appointments with each writing advisor when they first began attending IWCs. P2, P7, P8, and P9 responded that they respectively preferred to

work with writing advisors who helped them with all aspects of their papers. This meant that in addition to grammatical support, they sought somebody who offered help with logic, organization, brainstorming, and citing and referencing. P9 reported that she preferred to work with these writing advisors because she had more opportunities to discuss the usage of language. P9 responded that these writing advisors could find her specific issues and explain the related grammatical issue. This was not the preference for all the participants. For example, P4 and P5 found that the writing advisors who provided comprehensive support took too much time explaining broader writing issues, which meant that only a small portion of their work was completed in a given session. Thus, they preferred writing advisors who only focused on surface issues—such as grammatical mistakes and word choice—and did not address broader issues, such as organization or logic. This meant that a larger portion of their work would be reviewed in each session. P5 had another reason for this preference: she wanted the work to be her own and felt that if she followed writing advisors' suggestions on broader issues, she would lose ownership over the work. For instance, some writing advisors challenged her logic or suggested different approaches, and she felt that changing her logic or adopting these approaches would reduce her own content and replace it with the writing advisors' suggestions. P3 was unique in that she preferred writing advisors who looked at broader issues when she was completing her first draft, but preferred those who focused on surface issues when she was completing her final draft.

The Potential Influence IWCs Had on Participants' Writing Skills

Writing advisors provide the participants with IWCs to improve their academic writing. However, whether IWCs truly achieve that goal is unclear. Therefore, an analysis

of potential influences of IWCs on the participants is imperative (see Table 4). With the exception of P2, all the participants responded that IWCs obviously improved their writing skills with regard to grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, and brainstorming. The participants learned how to structure and format their work as well as logically link sentences and paragraphs. One participants increased confidence.

Table 4

The Potential Influence IWCs Had on Participants' Writing Skills

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
Grammar	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vocabulary	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Structure and linking	✓							✓	
Punctuation	✓			✓					✓
Brainstorming			✓			✓			

								✔	
APA format									
Confidence			✔						

Grammar

P1, P3, P5, P6, P7, P8, and P9 stated that they rarely made grammatical errors that were corrected by writing advisors in IWCs. P1 suggested that some writing advisors not only corrected her grammatical errors but also provided her a set of grammatical rules regarding her errors. She applied these rules when writing essays and now reports that she makes fewer grammatical errors. P5 suggested that even when writing advisors focused on efficiency and made changes without explaining them, she was still able to revisit the errors through the Track Changes function in Word. This allowed her to determine what errors she made and how to correct them by looking the errors up in grammar resources. As a result, she was able to remember the errors and can now avoid making the same grammatical errors again. P9 noted that writing advisors gave her both thorough explanations and supplementary resources. For instance, when she made errors related to tense, the writing advisors explained these rules and gave her a verb tense chart that featured the different tenses with examples. This gave P9 a deepened understanding of tense rules. When speaking, P9 smiled and expressed excitement about the learning process before reporting that she was now able to use verb tense correctly to effectively express her ideas. Likewise, P8 responded that after writing advisors explained the

difference between active and passive voice and when each was appropriate, she was able to use them both in their proper context to improve her academic writing.

Vocabulary

Several of the participants reported that the writing advisors helped them improve their vocabulary. For example, P1, P5, and P9 reported that they learned new words from IWCs and increased their academic vocabulary, thereby improving the accuracy of their word selection. P1, P5, and P7 observed that writing advisors' extensive vocabulary helped them to choose the most appropriate word to express their intent. P1 also reported that writing advisors added, deleted, or changed some words to avoid vague wording that might create ambiguity. P1 said that by repeatedly reading writing advisors' editorial suggestions, she learned new words and expanded her vocabulary, which in turn improved the quality of her subsequent assignments. P8 reported that she learned how to use transition words to logically link her ideas so that readers could understand her intent. She likewise noted that writing advisors introduced her to Word's synonyms function, which allowed to make her writing less repetitive and increased her vocabulary. P7 and P9 added that the support offered by writing advisors taught them how to differentiate between synonyms, such as 'learn' and 'study'. P9 said understanding the difference among synonyms allowed her to understand when to use them in her writing. Moreover, she could also selectively use them to make her writing more effective and help her express herself. P4 reported that she never realized she incorrectly used some prepositions until writing advisors found relevant mistakes in her written work. As a result, she was able to identify which prepositions were most appropriate in specific contexts. P5 had an analogous issue with the articles "a" and "the," but since receiving an

explanation from the writing advisors, she reported that she rarely used them incorrectly. In addition, P5 reported that she often used informal language in her writing. For instance, she frequently uses the word "very", which is inappropriate for academic writing at the tertiary level and should be avoided. The writing advisors helped her identify this issue and offered her formal phrasings to express herself. Thus, she developed a vocabulary of words and phrases that are more appropriate for formal, academic writing.

Structure and Linking

Several participants found that they were able to improve the structure of their essays, paragraphs, and sentences, and writing advisors taught them how to effectively use transitions to link their ideas. For example, P1 reported that under writing advisors' guidance, she learned how to structure her essays. They suggested changing the sequence of her paragraphs and adding transition sentences to ensure her essay was coherent and logical. They suggested that she considered how ideas in each of her paragraph related to each other and how they might effectively be linked together before writing so that she could develop a clear sequence. P1 also learned how to utilize transition words to link various sentences together in a paragraph. This allowed her to develop coherent passages where sentences were linked in a logical fashion that highlighted how her ideas supported her argument and related to each other. This resequencing applied to sentences as well. For instance, P8 stated that writing advisors taught her how to rephrase sentences to convey information more clearly and concisely.

Punctuation

Writing advisors also provided instruction on the proper usage of punctuation. P1 reported that writing advisors taught her how to correctly use punctuation when she was

incorporating transition words such as 'however.' For instance, when linking two independent clauses with "however", writing advisors taught her that a semicolon should precede the 'however,' and a comma should follow it. P4 and P9 reported that writing advisors identified instances where punctuation could confuse their meaning and taught them how to effectively use punctuation to ensure their meaning is clear. During their IWCs, P4 and P9 were also provided with a punctuation guide, and writing advisors added the missing or deleted the extra piece of punctuation. P4 and P9 were able to incorporate these lessons in future writing assignments, which allowed them to improve their writing.

Brainstorming

Two participants noted that attending IWCs helped them learn how to generate ideas. For instance, P3 stated that writing advisors always had many excellent ideas for her writing assignment. Writing advisors often helped her brainstorm ideas with a number of approaches, including listing words or phrases under her topic and evidence associated with each topic that would relate to her assignmentsessay. Writing advisors also suggested what key words to search to find evidence related to her topic. Likewise, P6 suggested that writing advisors helped narrow down her topic while she wrote a research paper. Writing advisors suggested she break her initial idea into smaller components that can be analyzed more easily. Thus, P6 learned how to narrow her other topic when writing other research papers.

APA

The support received during IWCs with respect to APA citing and referencing was multifaceted. P8 noted that writing advisors taught her how to format her APA

assignments using different functions in Word, and also provided instruction on how to cite and reference sources. However, they also recommended several resources that offered answers related to APA formatting, citing, and references, such as OWL Purdue and APA's official webpage. Thus, she became familiar with the expectations of APA and adhered to them in academic writing assignments.

Confidence

P4 suggested that attending IWCs increased her confidence in academic writing. Whenever she had some issues with academic writing, she could always turn to the writing advisors for support. As a non-native speaker, there were many problems in her assignments. She solved these problems with writing advisors' assistance, and this process increased her confidence while developing her academic writing skills.

Lack of Improvement

Of all the participants, only P2 suggested that attending IWCs did not obviously improve her writing skills; however, it is important to note that she booked fewer appointments than the other students. P2 suggested that writing advisors helped her correct many errors but that she would still make the same errors after several months. For example, P2 observed that her writing was filled with unclear pronoun references, which left readers unsure of her intended meaning. To address this issue, writing advisors taught her to rephrase her sentences to ensure every pronoun was clearly linked to an antecedent noun. Likewise, she learned how to eliminate run-on sentences by creating shorter sentences with more focus, making her writing easier to understand. However, though P2 reported that she initially made fewer mistakes with regard to these issues, she began making these same mistakes again two or three months later. P2 did however

praise the writing advisors for helping her brainstorm many excellent ideas for her topics, but she did not consider this to be part of her "writing".

Benefits and Limitations of IWCs

Eight out of the nine participants believed that IWCs improved their academic writing skills, highlighting their obvious benefits; however, there were also limitations.

Benefits

Students outlined several benefits to the IWCs, such as individualized instruction and the ability to choose which advisor they work with. They likewise noted that the IWCs helped them improve the writing they produced, allowed them to practice speaking and listening skills, and relieve the pressure associated with their writing assignments.

Individualized instruction. Participants noted that one-on-one sessions were more effective than learning in a class setting because they provided individualized instruction related to the specific issues each student struggled with. This was expressed by P9, who also reported that one-on-one instruction helped her understand and solve the specific writing issues that she struggled with her writing assignments. She said that the writing advisors were able to point out specific mistakes in each student's written assignment and guided them to correct them quickly. Moreover, this allowed students to ask questions related to writing assignments in real time and get instant answers. This was consistent with P8's experiences. When writing advisors explained grammar rules that she did not understand, she felt comfortable admitting that she did not understand some words and asked them to repeat themselves until she understood them. This would have been an issue in class instruction because, in Chinese culture, students are reluctant to ask questions as they are concerned about saving "mian zi" (face). Thus, they are

unable to make such inquiries in a class setting. However, in a one-on-one setting with an instructor, they feel more comfortable asking questions. Thus, the pedagogical model allowed Chinese students to access the direct support they need.

Choice of advisors. Students are provided with freedom of choice when they want to attend IWCs. P3 suggested that different writing advisors have their individual way to help students. This is consistent with P7, who believed that different writing advisors guide students differently. She suggested that if students are not satisfied with one advisor, they can choose to work with others. P3 likewise observed that students can freely choose to work with different writing advisors according to students' needs and both students and advisors' schedules. Thus, students have opportunities to find appropriate writing advisors and seek effective support. P3 also indicated that IWCs is open to students each term, including the summer term. Thus, though many services are suspended during the summer, Chinese international graduate students who take courses in the summer can still access to the service. Therefore, students can accept consistent support.

Improving the quality of writing. One obvious advantage of IWCs is improving students' assignments. P1, P2, and P5 suggested that their written submissions are free of careless errors, especially grammatical errors. This is supported by P2 and P5, who said that in instances where they received support from writing advisors, their final product was significantly improved from their original draft. P1 added that her writing was more concise as a result of the recommendations she received during IWCs. In addition, P2 indicated that beginning an assignment is difficult for her or other students as they do not know whether they are approaching assignment properly. Thus, she reported that one of

the key benefits of IWCs is the support they received interpreting assignment prompts and brainstorming. P3 and P1 echoed this sentiment: P3 adding that one advisor introduced her to a mind-mapping approach to brainstorming that proved effective, while P1 stated that her writing assignment had clear outlines and organized ideas as a result of the support she received during IWCs.

Speaking and listening skills. An unintended benefit of the one-on-one sessions was that they allowed participants to improve their speaking and listening skills. For instance, P8 believed that attending IWCs provided her with an opportunity to practice her English speaking and listening skills. She indicated that she often had discussions with writing advisors regarding her written content or their editorial suggestions. As writing advisors often had difficulties with understanding some paragraph or sentences, they asked P8's clarification. She stated that at the beginning, it challenged her to explain what she meant to writing advisors. As each appointment lasts thirty minutes, she had to make a quick response and explained her written content clearly and concisely. This developed her speaking skills. She also noted that writing advisors often explained grammar rules or gave suggestions, which required that she be able to listen to spoken English. Though she sometimes needed them to repeat themselves, she eventually became more adept to understanding spoken English. Therefore, her listening ability also improved.

Relieving pressure. IWCs are beneficial because they help relieve the pressure associated with academic studies. P6 stated that she thought her language proficiency was not as good as local students; therefore, she had no confidence in academic writing. She worried that her writing ability was inadequate to finish writing tasks. This caused her to

feel pressured when completing writing assignments, leading to stress. However, IWCs helped to alleviate the pressure associated with completing writing assignments. For example, she said, "If there were no IWCs supporting me during my graduate study, I would have felt extremely stressful". P6 also stated that writing advisors are her backup as they supported her throughout her master program. As a result, she felt safer and happier. In this way, writing advisors' assistance provided her with the sense of safety and coped with her intensive stress.

Limitations

With regard to limitations, the participants outlined several issues that may impede IWCs' effectiveness. These issues included excessive editing, overreliance on IWCs, limited appointments and insufficient time, the limited number of writing advisors, and narrow scope of the service.

Excessive editing. One participant in this study reported that writing advisors' excessive editing caused unnecessary troubles for her. P1 reported that the editorial suggestions offered by writing advisors helped perfect her own written assignments so much that it read as if it had been written by a native speaker. P1 reported that when providing suggestions, writing advisors suggested expressing her content in a different way. For example, a writing advisor had suggested re-ordering the first 3-4 sentences of her introduction and taught her how to re-sequence the sentences to be consistent with native writing. In this case, P1's instructor asked her if she had received help with the assignment or if somebody else had written it for her because the assignment was written at a significantly higher level than her previous assignments and was comparable to native speakers' proficiency. This suggestion of plagiarism was troubling as plagiarism is

a serious academic offence at the university. P1 said that writing advisors helped improve her assignment, offered grammar instruction, and helped her adopt more academic and formal words and phrases. She provided the instructor with her booking records and writing advisors' names, and the instructor called the Writing Support Desk to verify what P1 had said. Although there were booking records, she was under the impression that the writing advisors did not remember P1 and which writing assignments they helped with. After P1 offered the outline, draft, original version of the writing assignment, and writing assignment files attached in her email from the writing advisors' emails, the instructor determined that the work had not been plagiarized; however, P1 felt awful during the process. Thus, excessive editing had caused P1 some trouble.

Dependency. Another drawback of IWCs is that students became too dependent on them for their writing assignments. P2 felt that she developed a dependency and relied too heavily on writing advisors to help her with her writing assignments. As a result, she felt that she could not complete writing assignments by herself. This was reinforced by answers offered by P6. She suggested that she relied on writing advisors too much because she always thought writing advisors could help her solve all the writing problems. Though her writing ability was limited, she still was able to complete writing assignments of all courses without pressure. Therefore, P6 did not always focus on improving her writing skills during her IWCs. P2 also stated that she was dependent on writing advisors' tutorial support. In addition, P2 noted that she paid less attention to errors because she knew that writing advisors would help correct them. This is consistent with P5, who suggested that she relied on writing advisors to perfect her written assignments. Because she often felt rushed, P5 did not always consider editorial comments and

instruction offered by the writing advisors. For example, P5 used IWCs for many times, and she rethought edited assignments for only two or three times. She conceded that writing advisors corrected errors and provided suggestions while she just accepted them without considering the impact or implications of the suggestions.

      Limited appointments and time. Several participants complained that WSD's policy prevented them from receiving sufficient support. P3, P4, P7, P8, and P9 suggested that each appointment lasted thirty minutes, which was insufficient, especially for graduate students enrolled in education program. P9 noted that education graduate students have many writing assignments, and some essays are more than ten pages. She added that one thirty-minute appointment was not enough to finish editing their essays, and necessitated booking multiple IWCs. Moreover, she stated that the time interval between two appointments is a little long. P9 added that students have to spend time rereading written assignments because they possibly forget what content they wrote and what they have edited. This is consistent with P3, who believes that completion for assignments is inefficient because she had to attend IWCs repeatedly to continue to work on the same assignments. P4 also reflected that some written submissions were only half edited because of limited appointments and time. P7 likewise reported that one hour is not enough for liberal arts students, especially for graduate students in the education program, and it may be sufficient for science students. P8 suggested that because of limited time she booked maximum appointments several weeks ahead to ensure she had appointments because if she was booking the week of an assignment, it was likely that all the appointments would be booked up. P8 also reported that she worried that she could not finish editing her written assignments with writing advisors before the deadline

though she had two appointments each week. It is important to note that each of these students, when speaking of the limited availability of appointments, referred to it as an editing service. However, the purpose of the service is to give students instruction that they can use to improve their writing, not to proofread students' work.

This was exacerbated in instances when a writing advisor took longer time to read through a paper than other advisors. For example, P9 reported that a writing advisor read her written assignment and asked what she meant by about three sentences. After she explained, the writing advisors edited these sentences. The writing advisor then read the next three sentences and asked her to explain them again. P9 was required to repeatedly talking about what she meant. As a result, only several sentences were checked. P9 reported that she thought that the writing advisor's working efficiency was relatively low because other writing advisors would edit more content in 30 minutes.

Inadequate access to writing advisors. P3 suggested that about four writing advisors in Writing Support Desk provide IWCs for all students in UWindsor. According to a writing advisor in the WSD, in the summer of 2018, their IWC had two part-time academic writing advisors and a volunteer, and they offered approximately 48 hours of service per week in total, equal to 96 appointments (J. Horn, personal communication, July 19, 2018). Likewise, in the fall and winter terms of 2018/2019, there were two volunteer advisors, one full-time writing advisor, and four part-time writing advisors. They worked a combined maximum of 104 hours at the WSD per week, equal to approximately 180 appointments, though administrative duties and workshop commitments meant the actual availability was slightly lower than this most weeks (J. Horn, personal communication, July 7, 2019). P3 reported that each writing advisor also

provides writing workshops and goes to classes to give lectures as guest speakers; therefore, each one has an intensive work load. P3 felt that they had too much pressure and she noted that they cannot provide an efficient and effective backup.

Limited scope of the service. Participants also reported that they did not always feel satisfied with the support provided by each of the writing advisors. P8 and P9 suggested that they were not pleased with some writing advisors' IWCs because they exclusively corrected surface mistakes, such as grammatical errors. These writing advisors edit written assignments quickly because they did not give much consideration to other parts such as content, logic, or organization. This was reinforced by suggestions offered by P6, who found that these writing advisors did not offer any suggestion even though there were some issues with her content. For example, though one of her conclusions did not summarize and link her content effectively, one writing advisor made no comments about this; instead, the advisor simply corrected the grammar errors in the paragraph. P8 stated that simply correcting grammatical errors was not enough to improve her writing ability.

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Suggestions for Improving IWCs

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Each participant offered suggestions on how to improve the IWCs. In order to get efficient support some participants recommended removing the UWindsor's policy for IWCs that allows students only two appointments per week and only one on a given day. They suggested increasing the numbers of appointments for each student each day or each week and extending the time of each appointment. Some participants suggested more flexibly booking IWCs, while others proposed hiring more writing advisors from different academic backgrounds to effectively support those students enrolled in relevant

programs. The participants also recommended to leave the buffer time between two appointments. They also stated that each writing advisor should provide fewer IWCs to lessen the heavy work load and decrease their work pressure. In addition, writing advisors are suggested to moderately perfect students' written assignments and keep the majority of original content and that all versions of written assignments should be saved on a file in their writing advisor's computer for a month or a year. The participants also suggested enlarging the scope of the service of IWCs and establishing writing discussion groups.

Increasing Appointments and Extending Time

P1, P3, and P5 suggested increasing the number and the length of appointments for students, especially for those who have intensive writing coursework. P1 suggested that two 30-minute appointments each week was insufficient as she did not have time to complete her requirements before their respective due dates. This was reinforced by P2, who found that if writing advisors helped correct mistakes, 30 minutes would only be enough for them to edit three or four pages of a 10-page essay. If writing advisors help with brainstorming ideas, 30 minutes is also not enough to thoroughly discuss the topics and explain important concepts. P3 found that she would often require two appointments to go through a single paper, which meant that she had to make two trips to the WSD on different days, which often proved difficult for her schedule. Therefore, she suggested extending the duration of each appointment so that students would only have to come in once. P4 suggested that each appointment be extended from 30 minutes to 40 minutes. P5 found that though she arrived on time for her appointments, writing advisors often began her appointment late because they had spent excess time with the student who had

booked the appointment before her. In one case, a writing advisor started her IWC five minutes late for this reason. P5 complained that though writing advisors edited her written assignments faster than usual, they did not finish editing it, which influenced P5's study plan.

Flexibility

P3, P5, and P7 recommended that the coordinators provide students with more flexibly when booking appointments with regard to their course schedules because they found that demand for IWCs varied depending on their assignment dues. Therefore, P5 and P7 suggested increasing appointments for each student, while P9 suggested extending the time of each appointment while allowing three or four appointments each week. P7 found that students sometimes have several assignments at the same time, while other weeks they have no assignment. P3 offered a solution that might address this, suggesting that each student be able to book a total of 24 appointments each term that they can freely use at any time. P3 believed that if students can flexibly book appointments with regard to their own study plan, they can make a better use of IWCs. P5 reported that because most students are busy with final papers at the end of the term, the demand for IWCs is high; therefore, P5 and P7 suggested increasing the number of available appointments for each student during this period and allowing students to book two appointments each day.

Buffer Time

One of the issues was that appointments sometimes start late, either because writing advisors spent extra time with a prior student or because prior students take time to collect personal items, such as backpacks, laptops, smartphones, and water bottles. Thus, apart from increasing the time of each appointment, P5 suggested adding a 10-

minute buffer between appointments. This will not only provide writing advisors with a rest but will ensure that students' respective appointments will not interfere with each other.

Moderate Editorial Suggestions

Because P1's instructor had thought she committed plagiarism after getting support from writing advisors, she suggested that advisors should limit the extent of the support they provide and avoid changing too much of students' writing assignments. This will ensure instructors do not think that students hired ghostwriters to write assignments.

Archiving Editorial Work

P1 suggested that writing advisors save students' written assignments in a folder and keep them for a certain period of time. Because students are given a copy of the edited assignments via email or flash drive, the files often get deleted. When responding to this question, P1 suddenly stood up and emphatically stated that she was extremely lucky to keep her versions of editorial assignments with comments and writing advisors' names; otherwise, she would not have been able to prove that she had written the assignments when an instructor suspected her of committing plagiarism.She found that writing advisors were unable to identify which work they had edited and expressed concern that writing advisors would not remember her because they met so many students each day. Therefore, P1 suggested that writing advisors save students' assignments. If students like P1 have teachers question the academic integrity of their work, this will ensure that they have evidence to prove authorship over their work.

Hiring More Writing Advisors

P3, P8, and P9 recommended that the WSD to hire more writing advisors because there are currently only three permanent writing advisors servicing all of UWindsor's students. They noted that writing advisors have intensive work load and work pressure. Therefore, they sometimes are too tired to offer efficient IWCs. If more writing advisors were employed by the WSD, a decreased work load would ensure they were properly rested and could provide more efficient support to the large population of students who utilize their services.

Various Fields

Some participants suggested that writings advisors should come from the same academic background as the students they support. For example, P3 and P9 suggested that education students might be better supported by writing advisors whose academic backgrounds were in education programs. P3 noted that, depending on the academic context, a given word might have a meaning that is divergent from other academic contexts. Therefore, writing advisors with the relevant educational backgrounds would be able to accurately discern the meaning of such words in their respective academic contexts. This is consistent with P9, who felt that writing advisors with relevant academic background can give more pertinent suggestions for students' academic writing tasks.

Enlarging the Scope of the Service

The function of IWCs is to cultivate students' academic writing skills; thus, the service does not offer support for personal writing such as résumés, cover letters, and personal statements. However, Career Development and Experiential Learning, another on-campus resource, does provide support with each of these. Thus, writing advisors did not offer support for personal writing. For example, P9 encountered difficulties when

writing a complaint letter that she prepared for her IELTS General Training Writing test. She attended an IWC, and a writing advisor told her that it was not within the scope of the service. Thus, P9 suggests that they expand services offer support for language test. However, though the WSD does not provide support for résumés, cover letters, and personal statements, they do provide support with IELTS (J. Horn, personal communication, July 7, 2019). Thus, there seems to be some inconsistencies among the advisors with regard to what they will and will not help with.

Establish Discussion Groups

One participant, P3, suggested that the WSD should organize writing discussion groups and invite IWC attendees struggling with the same or similar issues so that students can discuss their writing problems and enhance their language skills through advisor-guided, peer learning. P3 felt that some students face the same writing issues; thus, she suggested that writing advisors can help these students by developing a writing support group through which students can cooperate with one another to solve their issues. She acknowledged that writing advisors offered many workshops that allowed students to discuss some writing problems; however, she noted that they do not work well because they rotate through the same workshops from one term to another.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

The current study explores Chinese international graduate students' perspectives of IWCs and how to facilitate IWCs to support this population in the Faculty of Education at UWindsor. To understand the implications of the findings, it is important to discuss how they answer the current studies central questions, which sought to identify

Chinese international graduate students' opinions of IWCs and how IWCs can be improved to support this population. Understanding these implications informs potential recommendations for IWCs. In this context, it is also important to discuss the limitations of the study.

<div align="center">**Students' Perspectives of IWCs**</div>

The data suggest that Chinese international graduate students found IWCs useful and reported that, by virtue of IWCs, they were able to successfully finish academic writing tasks while studying at an English-medium university. This is commonly evidenced by previous studies on writing support service that suggest that students in all academic disciplines at different educational levels can gain benefits from support with the purpose of enhancing their writing level (Lunsford & Ede, 2011; Yeats, Reddy, Wheeler, Senior, & Murray, 2010). The current study's participants, though, offered both praise and constructive criticism.

Praise for IWCs

The participants overwhelming praised the support they received during IWCs, noting that it helped improve a variety of critical academic skills. With respect to language, the participants collectively noted that their understanding of grammar, sentence structure, and punctuation improved. Moreover, they learned how to use conjunctions and transition words to link their ideas together. They were likewise able to expand their academic vocabulary and learn the differences between informal and formal language. These skills, in addition to improving their writing also enhanced their reading comprehension. The IWCs also provided essential guidance regarding APA citing, referencing, and formatting, which made their essays more professional.

With respect to more complicated elements of the writing process, the participants also collectively reported that they learned how to interpret assignments and gained insights into the brainstorming and organization processes, which enhanced their writing. They also often received constructive guidance on how to strengthen the logic of their arguments. This not only helped to improve participants' confidence but also their grades. Some participants even reported that the support they received helped to ease the stress and anxiety associated with writing assignments.

Criticisms of IWCs

Though the participants had overwhelmingly positive experiences during their IWCs, they did express some concerns. For example, one participant noted that writing advisors had edited her work too excessively and that her instructor had concerns about academic integrity as a result. Another participant stated that she disliked it when writing advisors offered criticisms or suggestions regarding her content or logic because she found that, after incorporating their suggestions, her assignments was less reflective of her own ideas. This complaint, though, was inconsistent with other participants' responses. For instance, several participants suggested that they felt disappointed that some writing advisors simply looked at surface errors, such as grammar, without looking at the broader issues, specifically content, structure, organization, and logic. Moreover, they expressed disappointment in the fact that writing advisors sometimes made changes without explaining the issues. These students felt that the services do not currently meet all of their needs, though it did provide important support. There were also concerns raised about the consistency of the service as some writing advisors provided different levels of support. However, given that some of these complaints contradicted each other

and that they seem to offer negative views of the very elements that other students praised, it seems that it would be difficult to satisfy each of these concerns without simultaneously exacerbating others.

<div align="center">**Supporting Students' Writing Needs**</div>

Based on students' perceptions of the IWCs, it is clear that a number of approaches should be maintained; however, it is likewise clear that some of these approaches need to be strengthened and new approaches need to be added in order to support students' needs.

Effective Approaches

The WSD uses several effective approaches, the two most important being one-on-one consultations and the use of supplementary materials.

   One-on-one consultations. Participants' had overwhelmingly high praise for one-on-one consultations. Due to the Chinese cultural concern of saving "mian zi" (face), students are often worried about asking question in front of colleagues. Thus, being able to attend one-on-one consultations allowed them to ask a variety of questions they were unwilling to ask in class for fear of looking unknowledgeable in front of their peers or wasting class time. Moreover, it showed them how grammar rules apply within the context of their own writing, which allowed students to understand the practical application of certain grammar rules. They were also afforded the opportunity to see which grammar rules they were struggling with. Though the WSD offered workshops in addition to IWCs, and though some of the participants did attend them and found them useful, it was the one-on-one consultations that most effectively addressed their writing needs.

Supplementary materials. Though only two participants reported that they had received supplementary materials when visiting the WSD, both of those students found them vital to their development as independent writers. One student received a table that outlines the different tenses, which she referred back to whenever she had a question. Another student was given a link to and shown how to navigate a citing and referencing website. When she was creating citations and reference entries, she often used this resource, which provided critical help in real time. Thus, the materials students were given continued to provide guidance and support even outside of the WSD's regular hours, making the students more independent.

Gaps or Service

While the services proved extremely valuable, participants did report some gaps in the service. These gaps included a lack of access to the service, providing consistent support, and failing to address students' goals. Some of these concerns underscore an additional issue: students' lack of understanding with respect to the scope and purpose of the WSD's IWC services.

Increasing appointments. The most common complain among the participants was that the WSD did not provide students with a sufficient number of one-on-one consultations. In an effort to ensure all students have equal access to the service, the WSD allows all students the same number of IWCs. However, this might not be equitable because different students experience different degrees of difficulties with regard to academic writing tasks. As Kuo and Roysircar (2004) suggest, international students encounter more challenges than domestic students when studying in a host country. One of typical challenges is English academic writing because international students lack the

experience required to compose academic writing in conformance with the standards of graduate-level work, and this gap in skills cannot be closed quickly (Rose & McClafferty, 2001). Academic writing is especially difficult for Chinese international graduate students because the thought processes and the linguistic patterns of Chinese structure the way they speak while English is not related to Chinese at all (Liu, 2015). This was echoed by the participants, many of whom stated that they were often in need of more appointments; however, rather than seeking insights into the linguistic patterns and rules of English as Liu (2015) suggests, they simply wanted editing support. One even noted that she had academic colleagues' book appointments so that she could take their place and get more support. Thus, it is clear that many of the Chinese international graduate students who utilize writing support services do not feel they have sufficient access to such services.

The limited appointments were even more of an issue in the summer term. Though many services on campus are suspended during this period, Chinese international graduate students often study through the summer and still want to access to service. This is reinforced by the fact that the Faculty of Education requires full-time students to maintain continuous registration throughout all terms of their graduate program (University of Windsor, n.d.). Some of these courses are condensed into six weeks or less, leaving less time for students to complete assignments and fewer available IWCs. For example, a student taking a three-week course in the summer only has three weeks to complete a term paper and therefore can only book a maximum of six appointments for this paper. In the fall and winter terms, though, they can book up to 26 appointments over a 13-week term for the same assignment. Because Chinese international graduate students

take these intensive writing tasks during the summer, they have a big demand for writing support service. However, the number of IWCs decreased, though IWCs are still offered at the WSD. Limited funding in summer terms has caused the WSD to reduce their availability to as few as two or three days each week in past summer terms (J. Horn, personal communication, January 4, 2019). The findings of this study suggest that the limited numbers of IWCs are not typically enough for students to finish editing their written assignments before submission dates.

In addition, a lack of buffer time between appointments further strained the limited amount of time during a consultation. For instance, advisors sometimes ran late with a student, which infringed on the next student's time. Even when appointments finished on time, students sometimes took a minute or more to collect their items before leaving. This likewise infringed on other students' times.

Inconsistent support. One participant found that writing advisors' working ability and experience varied and the support they provided is not consistent as well. She met a writing advisor who edited her work at a slower pace than other writing advisors, which left her dissatisfied. During IWCs, she was asked to explain to the writing advisor what she meant for each three sentences for one time or more until the writing advisor understood her content. The writing advisor then helped her edit those three sentences and the participant was asked to repeatedly explain the following content. As a result, only a small portion of her work was edited in that IWC. However, she found that some writing advisors were able to cover larger portions of her work than others. Therefore, she started preferred booking appointments with writing advisors who were able to read through more of her work. Based on her responses, the support provided by different

writing advisors was inconsistent. There were also issues with respect to what advisors focused on: some focused on macro-level issues, such as organization and structure; others focused on micro-level issues, such as grammar. In addition, where some advisors offered clear explanations regarding the reasons for making changes, others simply made changes without offering explanations. Likewise, some of the advisors did not have a background in education and therefore did not have an understanding of some of the key academic terms associated with the discipline. In such contexts, the support students were offered was more limited.

Inconsistent goals. Participants also noted that writing advisors sometimes focused on elements of their writing that students did not want to focus on. Some students, for instance, stated that writing advisors only looked at syntax and grammatical issues, including transition words and punctuation, but did not look at the broader issues that were equally important, such as logic and organization. In contrast, others expressed concern that writing advisors spent significant time offering commentary on their logic and reasoning when they actually wanted the advisor to focus on grammar. Different students have different goals and expectations; however, based on the participants' responses, the writing advisors sometimes shift the focus on the IWC to a topic that was not consistent with their students' goals.

Understanding IWCs' purpose. The findings of this study show there is a gap between students' understanding of IWC service and the mission statement of the service. The most significant concern was that students considered IWCs to be a proofreading service. This was consistent with Zhang (2011), who found that Chinese international master students thought the writing support services were designed to provide editorial

services. However, the WSD has a clearly established mandate that their goal is to teach students how to write effectively, not to simply edit their work (University of Windsor. n.d,). That said, when writing advisors provide one-on-one instruction, they do, in practical terms, edit the portion of the paper they go through, even though they are simultaneously providing instruction. This is consistent with Williams (2004), who observes that students turned to writing centres for a myriad of reasons and with a number of objectives, and that conflicts arose between some of their reasons and the goals of the writing centres due in large part to the writing center's practice. Williams (2004) added that some students visit writing centres with the hope of having their work corrected, while writing advisors want to achieve the wider goal of improving their writing skills. Because so many of the current study's participants saw the WSD as an editing service, it is clear that many students do not have a clear sense as to the purpose of the WSD specifically and IWCs in general.

Recommendations

Based on responses from participants of the study, it is clear that there are gaps in the service. It is therefore important to discuss what can be done to improve IWCs for students. However, students also have to be conscious of how they are using the service to maximize its benefits; thus, they must also consider how to best utilize such services.

Improving IWCs

To maintain the advantages of the WSD's IWCs and improve the quality of service, the WSD needs to consider the merits of and access to IWCs and supplementary materials. They likewise need to use a student-centered approach that focuses on students' goals. The value of such an approach can be enhanced if the service that

advisors provide is consistent and if students understand the scope and purpose of the service.

One-on-one consultations. Based on participants' comments, it is clear that the one-on-one consultations are a vital component of the WSD's program. Thus, it is critical that the access to these IWCs should be maintained. The biggest complaint from participants was the limited availability to these consultations. Thus, the WSD should consider offering more one-on-one consultations and increasing the number of consultations students are allowed to book. This is particularly true of international graduate students, who have unique writing needs and who are required to write a higher volume of materials than undergraduate students who receive the same amount of access to the service. The WSD might also consider providing students a flat number of appointments each term rather than putting weekly limits on students so that students can use them as needed. However, "the WSD put these limits in place for two key reasons: to ensure a larger number of students get help each week, and to encourage students to reflect on the instruction they receive from the writing advisors and apply it to their writing before a follow-up consultation" (J. Horn, personal communication, August 6, 2019). Thus, it may be difficult to accommodate such a request.

Buffer time. Because each appointment is scheduled back-to-back, incoming students sometimes saw their time infringed on for two common reasons: advisors sometimes ran late with one student, and students sometimes took an excessive amount of time to collect their personal belongings before leaving the desk where they were receiving help. To avoid this, it is critical to add buffer time between the appointments.

However, it is important to note that this buffer time should not interfere with the time already allocated to students.

Supplementary Materials. Two participants noted that they received supplementary materials during their IWCs, which reinforced the lessons they learned during their IWCs; however, this was not common practice. Because such supplementary materials have proven advantageous, the writing support providers should consider having more of these materials readily available and making a habit of offering them to students, even if students do not ask for them. If there are concerns about the cost of printing such materials or the waste associated with them, these materials might be forwarded to students in electronic form. To provide more pro-active support, writing advisors might have such materials available on their website and categorized in a manner that makes these resources easy to locate and access. This way, students who do not even book IWCs can still benefit from this knowledge, and such resources might alleviate the high volume of students that writing support services receive.

Establishing students' goals. During IWCs, writing advisors sometimes identify and suggest working on critical issues outside of those that the students came to get support for; as a result, some students leave sessions unsatisfied with the guidance they received. For instance, a student may want help with grammar, but a writing advisor shifts the focus of a session to introduction and thesis construction. In other instances, writing advisors may not offer the degree of explanation that a student wants. For example, P7 did not simply want writing advisors to correct her work but also offer explanations for their suggested changes; however, in some instances, no explanations

were offered. This suggests that writing advisors need to take a student-centered approach to ascertain students' goals before beginning an IWC.

This is consistent with Kim (2018), who notes that many writing support programs adopt a novel, student-centered writing instruction characterized by no-proofreading policies, and this new writing instruction approach is supported by a number of scholars (Lunsford, 1991; North, 1984). In Kim's (2018) example, the focus would be on offering instruction, not proof reading. This would have satisfied P7's expectations. Moreover, when supporting Chinese international students, it is critical that writing advisors take the initiative to engage in student-centered practices. This is critical because Chinese international students come from a teacher-centered background where they are taught not to question instructors. Thus, when writing advisors change the focus of an IWC, Chinese international students are likely to passively accept this shift in focus. This is true even in instances where they may be unhappy with the change and will not be satisfied with the support they receive during the consultation. These socially learned behaviours can impede the success of the assistance students receive from IWCs and can cause tension and conflict between students and writing advisors (Kim, 2018). Thus, writing advisors need to be hyper-conscious of these social barriers and ensure Chinese international students understand that the students have authority over the direction of IWCs. If there are instances where writing issues the students did not anticipate should take precedence over a student's initial goal, writing advisors should carefully and clearly articulate the need to address a given issue. Once this is done, advisor should then give the student a choice: continue to focus on what the student initially wants to focus on, or shift the focus to what the writing advisor believes is the more pressing issue.

Providing consistent support. Another common issue was that some advisors did not provide the same level of support or did not focus on the same kind of issues. Some participants believed that this phenomenon is caused by writing advisor's uneven ability. Thus, it is imperative for writing center directors to ensure that all writing advisors have the same qualifications. To achieve this, directors might provide mandatory training to ensure all advisors have the skills and knowledge to address students' writing issues. Upon completing such training, writing advisors might also be required to complete a standardized writing test to ensure that they understand common grammatical issues. The same approach might be used regarding APA citing and referencing.

Diversity among advisors. Some of the students suggested that having writing advisors with a larger variety of academic backgrounds would be advantageous. Thus, writing support programs should take this into consideration. In addition, cultural diversity is also a key issue, and though the participants in the current study did not mention this, it is a common issue according to some of the current literature (Liu, 2015; Zhang, 2011).

Academic diversity. Based on two participants' suggestions, writing advisors with different academic backgrounds should be assigned to help students from relevant backgrounds to provide pertinent help. However, participants observed that all writing advisors who provided IWCs are generalist writing advisors employed by the WSD. Kiedaisch and Dinitz (2007) found that if writing centers only hire generalist writing advisors, they cannot always successfully provide the most effective support for students who require an instruction on discipline-specific writing conventions. Thus, the WSD should have discipline-specific writing support. For example, each faculty could establish

individual WSDs to provide IWCs for their respective students. Alternately, writing advisors in the WSD might cooperate with each faculty member to learn about students' discipline-specific writing genres. This is consistent with William and Takaku (2011), who recommend that writing support is most effective when writing advisors collaborate with discipline-specific faculty to share knowledge about local disciplinary genres that students are requested to study. Since the UWindsor's IWCs does not provide discipline-specific instruction in most faculties, it is more feasible for current writing advisors to work with students' faculty to learn about discipline-specific genres to effectively support students from each discipline.

     Cultural diversity. Though the participants did not mention cultural diversity as an issue, the WSD had some culturally diverse writing advisors in the past. For example, one year, the WSD had a Chinese-American writing advisor who was proficient in both English and Mandarin. Many of the Chinese international students preferred to book appointments with this advisor for three key reasons: she had a deeper understanding of the differences between the two languages, could offer explanation in Mandarin, and understood their culture (J. Horn, personal communication, July 7, 2019). As suggested by Zhang (2011) and Wang and Machado (2015), Chinese students' writing styles are influenced by China's education mission, social values, and life philosophy, which differ from Canadian and Western cultural values. To address this gap, the WSD should consider hiring writing advisors from diverse cultural backgrounds. This means that the WSD should also ensure the hiring process is inclusive and carefully considers all candidates from culturally diverse backgrounds. If qualified applicants are not available, writing centre directors and advisors should proactively learn about best practices

relevant to international students' needs and adopt alterative teaching pedagogies to support these populations, an approach that is consistent with the recommendations of Wang and Machado (2015).

Educating students on the service. Based on participants' responses, many students believe that writing advisors provide editorial support. However, writing advisors' goal is to provide tutorial support and help to improve students' writing ability. It is clear that students' ill-defined conception of IWCs creates a disparity between their expectations and the mandate of most writing support centres. Thus, the writing advisors should outline the aims of the service and ensure students know that the purpose of IWCs is to teach students how to write effectively and not simply correct their errors.

Discussion groups. Students desire more time with writing advisors; however, writing advisors have limited availability due to funding restraints. To address this, the writing advisors might consider developing discussion groups in which a group of students doing the same project and who have the same questions might simultaneously get support on these issues. This would allow writing support services to help multiple students with more rudimentary questions that they may otherwise go through multiple times with individual students during their IWCs. As a result, students can focus on their individual issues during IWCs and get more personalized help while also getting support on more general issues within a group. Such an approach has the potential to more effectively utilize the time the service has to offer students while providing students with more time and support.

Discipline-specific workshops. Though UWindsor's Writing Support Desk offers a series on insightful workshops each semester, the workshops cover broad and more

general issues that are universally applicable to all students. To provide more specialized

support, such writing services might consider offering discipline-specific workshops.

This would require having a more discipline-diverse group of advisors who understand

these issues; however, such workshops would also benefit by allowing more interactive

sessions that allow students to share their common concerns and even solutions with their

discipline-specific peers.

Student Considerations

Based on responses from the participants, it is clear that students need to improve

their own level of engagement to maximize the support that they receive from IWCs. In

this context, there are two key things students must do: improve their time management

skills and be more active in the instruction process.

Time management. Many of the participants noted that they wanted more

appointments available to them, or that they wanted a flat number of appointments per

term to use at any time. This is in contrast to the weekly number of appointments that the

WSD currently offers. For example, students often did not use the service during the first

two weeks and felt like they should be able to move those appointments to later in the

term. However, as the WSD gets busiest toward the end of the term, this approach would

simply create a backlog of appointments and make the service even busier. If students

want to maximize these appointments, they need to develop their time management skills

and start their assignment earlier. This is consistent with Arbee and Samuel (2015), who

argue that time management significantly enhances the way students utilize IWCs,

especially if they begin or complete their assignment drafts early and create time to get

support prior to submission. This would allow them to get additional appointments while still working within the current constraints of the system.

Active listing and application. Many of the students spoke about IWCs as if they were part of a proof reading service; however, the WSD provides an instructional, not an editorial service. Several students complained that they could not book more than one appointment per day, but part of the reason for this policy is that it allows students to apply what they learned to their writing so that they can edit it themselves (J. Horn, personal communication, July 7, 2019). The issue is that some participants reported that they did not pay attention to the instruction advisors offered with regard to suggested change as they were under pressure to get their assignments completed. Participants also reported that they did not edit their own work and often did not try to correct or avoid mistakes when writing because they assumed the writing advisors would catch these errors. It is therefore important that students be active listeners during IWCs so that they can learn the grammar lessons being taught and apply them to their own writing, either when editing or writing. Thus, when they attend an IWC, there will be fewer errors in their writing, and writing advisors will be able to get through larger portions of their writing. This will also allow students to maximize the appointments they do have under the current system.

Limitations

Though the findings offered in the current study offer a number of valuable insights in IWCs and the ways in which they support Chinese international students, it does have some limitations. The limitations relate specifically to four key issues: the

applicability of the findings to broader contexts, an unintended gender and age biases, potential inaccuracy associated with self-reported data, and language barriers/translation.

Applicability

Though writing advisors, directors, administrators, academics, and students will likely be able to apply many of the findings from the current study, the implications may not be broadly applicable to all settings. This thesis research was done in a specific context: data were collected from Chinese international graduate students enrolled in education programs at a Canadian comprehensive university. Thus, some of the issues may be specific to Chinese students and others might be experienced by other international students in Canada. As a result, though the experiences of this population may be transferable and potentially parallel to other contexts—such as international students from other countries studying in different English-speaking countries—it is important for academics to consider how more specific contexts may change, enhance, or mitigate the concerns outlined by the participants in the current study. It is important to note, however, that the current findings are consistent with the majority of the studies surveyed in the literature review.

Gender and Age Biases

Though the study did have certain limitations by design, it did not intend recruit only female participants, nor did it intend to only recruit students in their 20s.

Gender. Because all the participants in this study are female, it is likely that male participants may have had different views of and experiences with IWC service. Therefore, the findings of this study might not represent the concerns male students have regarding IWCs. It is important to note that the researcher did try to recruit male

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participants; however, the researcher only knew of one male Chinese international graduate student in the Faculty of Education at the time of the study, and he did not meet the inclusion criteria because he had not booked any IWCs. This is a point that future studies might investigate because it is important to understand why this population is not utilizing such services and what strategies they are using to obtain writing support.

Age. All the participants in the current research were in their 20s during their graduate studies; however, a number of Chinese international students in the program are 'mature' students who are older than 29. Unlike the male students in the program, many of these students did book IWCs with regularity throughout their studies; thus, securing their perspectives would have offered valuable insights. Though the researcher did try to recruit some of these students, many of them were completing theses of their own and did not have time to participate in the current study. As a result, the unique experiences and perspectives of this population were not represented in the current study's findings. Therefore, future research should consider how IWCs support this population.

Validity of Self-Reported Data

One of the concerns with respect to self-reported data was that participants might provide inaccurate information during the interview procedure. This could happen for a number of reasons. For example, out of politeness, participants might be reluctant to criticize writing advisors or the support offered through IWCs. This is perhaps more likely due to China's Confucian pedagogical model, which requires student to be respectful of teachers. In addition, some participants were still in the process of completing their master's degree and were in need for writing support. These participants might have worried that negative perspectives of IWCs and writing advisors could

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influence the support they receive. There might also be recall issues. For instance, some participants had completed their graduate program more than a year before the study was conducted. Given the duration of time that passed, they might not have remembered the details of their IWC experiences precisely. In addition, when speaking about their own academic issues, some students may have been embarrassed about admitting to certain issues due to the Chinese cultural concern about saving "mian zi" (face). Each of these concerns could impact the accuracy of data. Therefore, some information they offered might be not as precise or reliable. However, given that the participants' responses were consistent with each other in many respects, and that the overall findings were consistent with previous research, it is clear that the results are reasonably reliable.

Language Barriers

The accuracy of the data may have also been compromised to a small degree as a result of language barriers. With the exception of one participant, all of the interviews were conducted in Mandarin and then translated into English. Whenever a translation is done, there is room for error. However, each translation or transcription in the current study went through a member-checking process. This meant that every participant had a chance to read their respective transcriptions to ensure the transcriptions were consistent with the participants' intended meaning. P6's interview was conducted in English as she was a native Cantonese speaker who had limited Mandarin proficiency. Because English is not her mother tongue, it is possible that she was not able to express herself as clearly as she otherwise would have if she were using her native language. However, the member-checking process did allow her a second opportunity to ensure that her intent was clearly expressed in the data.

Future Research

Investigating the research questions set out at the beginning of the current study revealed several additional questions. It is therefore important that future research explore some of these questions. In terms of pedagogical approaches that writing services use, it is important to explore how student-centred approaches can be more effectively integrated when supporting Chinese international students who are more accustomed to teaching-centred approaches. Few studies have mentioned the use of supplementary materials in conjunction with IWCs, and as two participants noted their value, it is critical to understand what tools would prove most effective. Given that the students who seek helps through IWCs are themselves culturally and ethnically diverse, it is also vital that future studies investigate how this diversity and the potential lack of diversity at writing centres shape the services provided to diverse student bodies. In this context, it is also important to investigate which pedagogical approaches are most inclusive and effective when supporting diverse populations. The current study also proposes using training and testing to ensure advisors are able to provide consistent and competent service; however, no studies were found during the literature review that explored such requirements. Thus, it is essential to determine which tests could be used and compare their respective effectiveness.

The study also had several limitations by design, namely its focus on Chinese international graduate students in Faculty of Education. Thus, future studies should consider how other international students engage with IWCs. For example, India, like China, has seen a number of their students studying in Canada, so future research might focus on students from India. Future research might also consider how IWCs support

students from other disciplines or even undergraduate students. As the current study has proposed alternatives to addressing students' discipline-specific needs, a comparative study might be done between universities that offer discipline-specific writing support and those that use a generalist model to determine the benefits and limitations of each.

Conclusion

Chinese international students pursuing a master's of education at Canadian universities often struggle writing assignments. To overcome this challenge, many of these students rely on IWCs. Based on responses offered by the current study's participants, these consultations provide a number of benefits, helping students improve their grammar, use of punctuation, and citing and referencing skills. They also help students engage in more critical thinking and organize their ideas. Such support can help students overcome the stress associated with academic work. However, participants also reported some shortcomings in the service. Students overwhelmingly feel that there are not enough IWCs available to them, and the service is sometimes inconsistent. In addition, the advisors sometimes lack disciplinary or cultural diversity, even when they make sincere efforts to address both concerns. Moving forward, it is clear that writing support services need to maintain the effective strategies that they have employed in the past; however, they must also consider how they can improve their services to accommodate the unique needs of the increasingly diverse student body that they are serving. In addition, students overwhelmingly agreed that IWCs should be longer and that students should be allowed to book more than two per week. Students also expressed conflicting reports with respect to the level of support offered by writing advisors: some felt the changes were too extensive, while others felt that advisors only offered surface feedback. Likewise, some

felt that advisors made changes without adequately explaining them, while others felt that writing advisors failed to cover a significant portion of their material because they spent too much time explaining the issues. Thus, based on this feedback, it is critical for writing advisors to establish the goals and expectations of each student at the outset of an appointment to ensure they are working toward each student's individual goals. To enhance their engagement in and maximize the support that they receive, students must engage in effective time management and be active in the instruction process. Effective time management will ensure students secure more appointments and will ensure students get support throughout the writing process, which they can implement as they work, instead of waiting until an assignment is complete and seeking corrective instruction. Likewise, actively listing to and applying the instruction offered during IWCs will maximize the service and allow them to use it as it is intended to be used: as a tutorial service, not an editorial service.

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Appendix A: Consent form

[Interview]

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title of Study: Chinese International Graduate Students' Perspectives of Individual Writing Consultations

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by **Zhiqian Guo**, from the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. This research is supervised by **Dr. Zuochen Zhang**, from the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. Results from this study will provide constructive suggestions for IWC administrators, which may make significant contributions to the knowledge body of international education, especially with respect to the development of international students' writing skills.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel to contact Zhiqian Guo from the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. Zhiqian Guo can be reached via email at guo1z@uwindsor.ca. Dr. Zuochen Zhang can be reached via phone at (519)253-3000 x 3960 between 9.00am-4.00pm or via email at zuochen@uwindsor.ca. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This purpose of the study is to investigate Chinese international graduate students' opinions of individual writing consultations at a Canadian university.

PROCEDURES

Research data will be collected through interview. If you volunteer to participate in an interview, please do the following:

Sign this consent form and participate in an interview. The interview will last for approximately 30 minutes. During the interview, you will be asked to share perspectives of individual writing consultations you attended. After the researcher transcribes the interview, the transcript will be sent to you by email. You will receive this email in two weeks after you complete the interview. You will have the opportunity to edit your transcripts to make sure your perspectives are accurately represented. Then you need to send back your edit transcript within 15 days from the date of the email. Once the researcher receives your feedback transcript, your email information will be deleted immediately.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS
Each interview will be conducted by Miss Guo, according to the participant's preference. Interviews can be carried out on weekend if participant so chooses.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

There are no direct benefits for you as a participant but Miss Guo will summarize the information and send it back to UWindsor. Miss Guo can establish some recommendations on current, individual writing consultations, which administrators can utilize to enhance current individual writing consultations practices, objectives, and pedagogies so as to effectively support future students.

COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION

There is no compensation for participation.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be involved in an interview. If you volunteer to be in an interview, you have to agree to being recorded. You may withdraw from the study up to 3 weeks following the interview without consequences of any kind. The 3-week constraint does not include the period for member-checking.

If you withdraw, the information and the data belonging to you will be immediately deleted. You may also decline to answer any questions you do not want to answer in the interview, and still remain in the study.
If you decide to withdraw prior to the interview, you can leave the site without any consequences. If you decide to withdraw after the interview starts, you can do so by leaving the site.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The findings of this study will be made available to the participants by posting an executive summary of the study on the University of Windsor REB website.
Web address: http://www.uwindsor.ca/reb
Date when results are available: September 30, 2020
SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA
These data may be used in subsequent studies, in publications and in presentations.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

I understand the information provided for the study **Chinese International Graduate Students' Perspectives of Individual Writing Consultations** as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I consent to the audio-recording of the interview. I have been given a copy of this form.

_____
Name of Participant

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

_____   _____
Signature of Investigator   Date

Appendix B: Letter of information

University of Windsor

[Interview]

LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title of Study: Chinese International Graduate Students' Perspectives of Individual Writing Consultations

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by **Zhiqian Guo**, from the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. This research is supervised by **Dr. Zuochen Zhang**, from the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. Results from this study will provide constructive suggestions for IWC administrators, which may make significant contributions to the knowledge body of international education, especially with respect to the development of international students' writing skills.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel to contact Zhiqian Guo from the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. Zhiqian Guo can be reached via email at guo1z@uwindsor.ca. Dr. Zuochen Zhang can be reached via phone at (519)253-3000 x 3960 between 9.00am-4.00pm or via email at zuochen@uwindsor.ca.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This purpose of the study is to investigate Chinese international graduate students' opinions of individual writing consultations at a Canadian university.

PROCEDURES

Research data will be collected through interview. If you volunteer to participate in an interview, please do the following:

Sign this consent form and participate in an interview. The interview will last for approximately 30 minutes. During the interview, you will be asked to share perspectives of individual writing consultations you attended. After the researcher transcribes the interview, the transcript will be sent to you by email. You will receive this email in two weeks after you complete the interview. You will have the opportunity to edit your transcripts to make sure your perspectives are accurately represented. Then you need to send back your edit transcript within 15 days from the date of the email. Once the researcher receives your feedback transcript, your email information will be deleted immediately.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

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Each interview will be conducted by Miss Guo, according to the participant's preference. Interviews can be carried out on weekend if participant so chooses.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

There are no direct benefits for you as a participant but Miss Guo will summarize the information and send it back to UWindsor. Miss Guo can establish some recommendations on current, individual writing consultations, which administrators can utilize to enhance current individual writing consultations practices, objectives, and pedagogies so as to effectively support future students.

COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION

There is no compensation for participation.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be involved in an interview. If you volunteer to be in an interview, you have to agree to being recorded. You may withdraw from the study up to 3 weeks following the interview without consequences of any kind. The 3-week constraint do not include the period for member-checking. If you withdraw, the information and the data belonging to you will be immediately deleted. You may also decline to answer any questions you do not want to answer in the interview, and still remain in the study.
If you decide to withdraw prior to the interview, you can leave the site without any consequences. If you decide to withdraw after the interview starts, you can do so by leaving the site.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The findings of this study will be made available to the participants by posting an executive summary of the study on the University of Windsor REB website.

Web address: http://www.uwindsor.ca/reb
Date when results are available: September 30, 2020

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

These data may be used in subsequent studies, in publications and in presentations.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

I understand the information provided for the study **Chinese International Graduate Students' Perspectives of Individual Writing Consultations** as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I consent to the audio-recording of the interview. I have been given a copy of this form.

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

_____   _____

Signature of Investigator   Date

Appendix C: Audio consent form

CONSENT FOR AUDIO TAPING

[Interview]

Research Participant Name:

Title of the Project: Chinese International Graduate Students' Perspectives of

Individual Writing Consultations

I consent to the audio-taping of interviews, procedures, or treatment.

One year after finalizing data collection, all material data will be shredded. After transcription and verification, digital audio files will be deleted immediately, and the electronic files will be permanently deleted from the computers.

This research has been cleared by the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board.

_____   _____

      (Research Participant)   (Date)

Appendix D: Interview questions

[Interview Questions]

1. How important is writing in your program?

2. University of Windsor provides individual writing consultations for students, how many times have you used the service, and why?

3. What do/did you expect to get from the service?

4. When you book(ed) individual writing consultations, Do/did you try to have the same writing advisor all the time? Why?

5. Did you find individual writing consultations influence your writing skills?

6. What do you think are the strengths and/or weaknesses of the individual writing consultations?

7. What are your suggestions for improving the individual writing consultations (in the future)?

[面试问题]
1. 对于你课程项目，写作有多重要？
2. 你使用过多少次温莎大学提供一对一的英语写作辅导？
3. 你接受一对一的英语写作辅导的动机是什么？
4. 你接受这种一对一的英语写作辅导？你喜欢被同一个写作顾问辅导还是被不同的写作顾问辅导，为什么？
5. 一对一英语写作辅导对你的写作技能是否有影响？如何影响的？
6. 对这种一对一的英语写作辅导，你认为它有哪些利弊？
7. 你觉得一对一的英语写作咨询有哪些方面仍需改进？

Appendix E: Recruitment flyer

University of Windsor

[Recruitment Flyer]

We are currently recruiting participants for the study:

Chinese International Graduate Students' Perspectives of Individual Writing Consultations

This study is open to Chinese international graduate students over 18 years old who joined individual writing consultation. **You are** taking or have, in the last three years, completed a graduate program **in the Faculty of Education at University of Windsor.**

If you would like further information, please contact:
Zhiqian Guo: guo1z@uwindsor.ca
Dr. Zuochen Zhang: zuochen@uwindsor.ca

Appendix F: Contact information

[contact information]

Dear_____ (Name of the Participant):

Thank you for your interest in my research.

This purpose of the study is to investigate Chinese international graduate students' opinions of individual writing consultations at a Canadian university. Zhiqian Guo will conduct an interview that will last approximately 30 minutes. If you volunteer to participate in this study, Miss Guo will send you the Letter of Information and a Consent Form as well as an Audio Taping Consent form. You will be asked to sign a Consent Form and an Audio Taping Consent form send them back to me via email or in person.

Miss Guo will book a single study room at the library for the purpose of hosting the face-to-face interview with participants.

Best regards,

Zhiqian Guo

VITA AUCTORIS

NAME: Zhiqian Guo

PLACE OF BIRTH: Siping, Jilin, China

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1992

EDUCATION: Jilin Normal University, B.A., Siping,
                            China, 2015

                            University of Windsor, M. Ed.,
                            Windsor,

                            ON, 2019